ERICSSON CUP CLOSE DOWN POSITION

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AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH

SOCCER WEEKLY

VOL 18 No. 808—TUESDAY, JANUARY 14 1997 • REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST — PUBLICATION No NBQ5726 $2.50

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KO JEONG WOON

STH KOREAN CAPTAIN

OPTUS WORLD SOCCER SERIES PREVIEW

FOUR NATIONS TOURNAMENT

BY HENRY WIZGIER

Norway Favourites to Win

When Norway beat England for the first time ever, back in the eighties, their top TV commentator had a fit.

"We've beaten you English", he screamed into the mike. "Can you hear me Margaret Thatcher, Queen Elizabeth, Winston Churchill, William Shakespeare?". The story goes that he was last heard of being carried out while still going through the whole gamut of world famous English historical chatacters "Henry the Eighth, Robin Hood, King Arthur etc. etc. etc.".Talk about going 'over the moon', this guy went over the galaxy. But then, David must have felt preety good when he KO'd Goliath.

Norway, have come a long way since then and nowadays are rightfully looked on with respect and even some fear, in the world game. They did not exactly set the 94 World Cup alight in USA but as ever, proved to be dour, physical and very difficult to beat. Since then they have got stronger still and quite recently touched the dizzy heights of Number 2 in the actual FIFA world rankings , with only Brazil above them.

Norway are currently ranked 14, with South Korea at 45, Australia 48 and New Zealand 136.

NORWAY:

Unfortunately, we will not be seeing the full-strength Norwegian side but that, is probably a blessing in disguise as neither will Australia. But the real disappointment is that in all honesty, the Norwegians will only be fielding something like their 3rd strongest team.

It is understandable that they haven't brought their English-based players like Solskjaer and Johnsen of Man United, Bjornebye of Liverpool Fjortoft of Middlesbrough and Lundevkam of Southampton who are all heavily involved in the English Premier League. (Does that sound familiar?) But sadly their squad includes only 4 players from Norway's leading club Rosenborg who have recently pulled off one of the great shocks in the entire history of the European Cup, when they beat no less an opponent than AC Milan, in the San Siro to boot.

Only about four players in this squad have played in Norway's recent World Cup qualifiers, but three of them are midfielders, Erik Mykland, Bent Skammelsrud and Stale Solbakken. So, we are hopefully going to see almost the fully-equipped Norwegian engine of a machine that is ranked above Argentina and Croatia.

Also, Norway are churning out so many good players these days that despite the absence of Solskjaer and Fjortoft up front, we will still see a dangerous pair of strikers who are breathing down the regulars necks. Mons Ivar Mjelde has recently banged in 15 goals in 10 games for Norway's second major club Brann and he will have his team partner Tore Andre Flo alongside him. The latter, has aroused the interest of several English Premier league clubs and to make matters even more interesting, coach Egil Olsen has also brought along Havard Flo who plys his trade with Werder Bremen in the Bundesliga. Defender Tore Pedersen also plays in the same league, with Hamburg's 'other club', St Pauli.

AUSTRALIA:

After so much criticism about the way Eddie Thomson played or more often 'did not play' his attackers, it's interesting and refreshing to see so many strikers in this Raul Blanco drawn-up list.

Will we see the in-form David Zdrilic partnered up front with arguably the Ericsson League's most accomplished front-man Paul Trimboli? Also, after his goalscoring feast against Tahiti in the recent Oceania Nations Cup, many will want to see Kris Trajanovski up front, but the opposition in this tournament will be in a different class.

Australia's most recent 'serious' outing was against Saudi Arabia back in October, but that team was mostly made up of European exiles. For a more accurate look at recent form, we have to go back to September and the Simba Cup in South Africa where the Ericsson Cup Aussies beat an understrength Ghana 2-0 and 99th-ranked Kenya 4-0, but lost the decicive game to South Africa 0-2. The inevitable excuse was churned out for that defeat and this time it was the expulsion of Tony Popovic, so the question still remains un-answered. How good are the 'home-based' Australian National Team?

This tournament will provide the answer.

SOUTH KOREA:

Will be smarting from their recent humiliation in the Asian Cup, played in United Arab Emirates. Before the National Championship of Asia, they were regarded as one of that continent's two great football powers, Japan being the other . This meant of course that they weren't really considered as Australia's possible opponents for that priceless World Cup 98 place because they, will be the 4th team. (The Asian play-offs start in a couple of months time).

But since that 'debacle in the desert', the Asian group now looks wide open and in South Korea we could well be looking at Asia's 4th team and Australia's last hurdle for France. Even if they are not our actual opponents, they will certainly provide a good idea of what to expect.

In that Asian Cup competition, South Korea scraped through to the Quarter Finals where they were trounced by Iran 6-2.

The danger men from Korea are likely to be Lee Ki Hyung (No. 12) an attacking defender from Korean Championship contenders Suwon Bluewings, who played for the Koreans in the USA Olympics and scored against Italy. Also, the striking pair of Ko Jeong Woon (No. 11) who has recently signed for J-League side Cerezo Osaka for over 2.5 million dollars and Hwang Sun Hong (No. 18) who has banged in 40 goals for the National team.

NEW ZEALAND:

Are an unknown quantity, but should never be under-estimated even though last year they had a 'best-forgotten' tour of South America which hit rock-bottom in Montevideo, where they were sloughtered 7-0 by Uruguay.

Little is known about the club game in the land of the 'long white cloud', something which this paper is working on to rectify. Vaughn Coveny, Neil Harlock and Chris Zoricich will all be familiar names to Aussie soccer fans and especially, Raul Blanco, through their performances for Ericsson Cup clubs, but the rest of the squad are preety much unknown.

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OPTUS — Four Nations Tournament SQUADS

AUSTRALIA

Goalkeepers		
1	Zeljko Kalac	Sydney United
22	Jason Petkovic	Adelaide City
Defenders		
2	Matthew Bingley	Marconi
3	Robbie Hooker	West Adelaide
4	Alex Tobin	Adelaide City
5	Milan Ivanovic	Adelaide City
6	Luke Casserly	Marconi
13	Dominic Longo	Marconi
14	Mark Babic	Sydney United
15	Robert Trajkovski	Sydney United
Midfielders		
7	Ernie Tapai	Collingwood
10	Craig Foster	Marconi
16	Jason Polak	Sth Melbourne
18	Aytek Genc	Sydney United
Strikers		
9	Paul Trimboli	Sth Melbourne
11	David Zdrilic	Sydney United
17	Alistair Edwards	UTS Olympic
19	Kris Trajanovski	UTS Olympic
20	Zeljko Babic	Marconi
21	Warren Spink	Sth Melbourne

NEW ZEALAND

Coach: Keith Pritchett

No.	Name	Club	Age	Caps
Goalkeepers				
1	Jason Batty	North Shore United	25	19
20	Grant Schofield	Waitakere City	33	6
21	Mark Paston	Napier City	21	0
Defenders & Midfielders				
2	Neil Harlock	Wollongong City	22	8
5	Rodger Gray	Waitekere City	29	46
4	Andy Rennie	Napier City Rovers	26	16
3	Jason New	Napier City Rovers	24	9
14	Danny Hay	Central United	20	3
6	Graham Marshall	Wellington United	28	15
	Alun Evans	Woolston	26	26
7	Stuart Jacobs	Miramar Rangers	30	19
8	Michael McGarry	Miramar Rangers	30	79
10	Chris Jackson	Miramar Rangers	25	24
11	Simon Elliott	Miramar Rangers	22	21
17	Mark Elrick	Central	28	19
15	Chris Zoricich		26	30
Forwards				
16	Vaughan Coveny	Sth Melbourne (Aust)	25	30
9	D McClennan	Waitakere City	30	49
12	Mark Burton	Osnabruck (Germany)	21	2
13	Nik Viljoen	Waitakere City		

Dan Eggen: Brondby and Norway.

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Melbourne, Bob Jane Stadium
SOUTH KOREA v NORWAY
(K.O. 6.15pm)
AUSTRALIA v NEW ZEALAND
(K.O. 8.30pm)
Wednesday 22 January 1997
Brisbane, Suncorp Stadium
NEW ZEALAND v NORWAY
(K.O. 6.15pm)
AUSTRALIA v SOUTH KOREA
(K.O. 8.30pm)
Saturday 25 January 1997
Sydney Football Stadium
SOUTH KOREA v NEW ZEALAND
(K.O. 6.15pm)
AUSTRALIA v NORWAY
(K.O. 8.30pm)

SOUTH KOREA

Coach: PARK Jong Hwan

Number	Name	Club	Age	Caps
Goalkeepers				
1	KIM Byung Ji	Ulsan Horang	26	12
21	KIM Bong Soo	Anyang Cheetahs	26	3
Defenders				
24	KIM Joo Sung	Pusan Royals	31	68
2	KIM Pan Keun	Anyang Cheetahs	30	39
6	SHIN Hong Gi	Ulsan Horang	28	41
12	LEE Ki Hyung	Suwon Bluewings	22	8
4	KANG Chul	Sangmoo	25	32
20	HONG Myung Bo	Pohang Atoms	27	74
5	HUH Ki Tae	Puchon Elephants	29	11
22	LEE Young Jin	Chonan Chunma	24	4
3	PARK Kwang Hyun	Chonan Chunma	29	1
Midfielders				
23	YOO Sang Chul	Ulsan Horang	25	20
7	SIN Tae Yong	Chonan Chunma	26	15
13	PARK Nam Yul	Chonan Chunma	26	17
17	HA Seok Ju	Pusan Royals	28	49
19	SEO Jung Won	Anyang Cheetahs	26	50
14	PARK Tae Ha	Pohang Atoms	28	5
Forwards				
8	ROH Sang Rae	Chunnam Dragons	26	14
11	KO Jeong Woon	Chonan Chunma	30	58
18	HWANG Sun Hong	Pohang Atoms	28	70
9	KIM Do Hoon	Chonbuk Dinos	26	16

NORWAY

Coach: Egil Roger Olsen

Name	Club	Age	Caps
Goalkeepers			
Thomas Gill	Duisburg (Germany)	31	0
Jorn Jamtfall	Rosenborg	30	0
Defenders			
Dan Eggen	Brondby	27	2
Jonny Hanssen	Tromso	24	0
Erik Hoftun	Rosenborg	27	0
Tore Pedersen	St. Pauli (Germany)	27	38
Thomas Pereira	Moss	23	0
Midfielders			
Roger Helland	Brann	23	0
Tommy Larsen	Stabaek	23	2
Erik Mykland	Linz (Austria)	25	40
Bent Skammelsrud	Rosenborg	30	14
Stale Solbakken	Lillestrom	28	21
Trond Soltvedt	Rosenborg	29	0
Forwards			
Havard Flo	W Bremen (Germany)	26	2
Tore Andre Flo	Brann	23	8
Mons Ivar Mjelde	Brann	29	3
Sigurd Rushfeldt	Tromso	24	7
Frank Strandli	Lillestrom	24	11

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2-0 6/1	0-0 8/1	0-1 8/1
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3-0 12/1	3-3 50/1	0-3 40/1
3-1 11/		1-3 33/1
3-2 25/1		2-3 40/1
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4-1 33/1		1-4 80/1
4-2 50/1		2-4 80/1

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ERICSSON CUP MATCH REPORTS

UNITED PAY BACK BRISBANE WITH INTEREST

Sydney United 4 — Brisbane Strikers 0

By JOHN ECONOMOS

Four goals, (two in each half, all scored by Sydney United), four yellows plus one red card, all to Brisbane Strikers, plus a healthy home crowd of 10,560, said it all last Sunday night at the Parramatta Stadium, to see the Sydney based team forge ahead as outright leaders in the Ericsson League.

A hungrier, extremely well organised and more mobile Sydney United completely reversed, (with interest), the previous week's 3-0 deficit suffered by the Sydney team up in Brisbane.

In all fairness the Queenslanders were always going to be up against it as they lost central marker Alan Hunter in the 13th minute following a bone-crushing tackle by United's enforcer Velimir Kupresak. Then gifted and intelligent.central midfielder Troy Cranney limped off two minutes before the break plus they lost their skipper and coach Frank Farina sent off for double bookable offences by referee Simon Micaleff 15 minutes from time when the score read 2-0 to United

United's ball playing marksman Ante Milicic overshadowed his strike-twin David ('Lawman') Zdrilic with a brilliant brace of goals whilst narrowly missing another two.The magical Milicic nailed his first in the 13th minute latching onto a low through-ball fired by left midfielder Aytec Genc into Brisbane's box. Milicic effortlessly weaved past two Queensland defenders before hitting a right footed11 metre drive into the target to draw first blood in United's fierce revenge on the Queenslanders

Three minutes later Troy Cranney stung back for Brisbane when he exploded a snap 20 metre shot at United's frame where the towering and alert full international custodian Zeljko Kalac ate up the hot missile.

Left flank-midfielder Genc doubled United's scoreline in the 11th when he cleverly ghosted in from his line to intercept a top flat cross fired into the box by Zdrilic. Genc easily hit the target giving Brisbane's stand-in 'keeper Graham Ross no chance from point-blank range.

United 11 minutes later could have had yet a third. Chief engineer and roving linkman Kresimir Marusic streaked upfield on a 35 metre raid ending by spraying wide to the right for Milicic. Milicic from that angle unleashed a long flat diagonal drive that shaved Brisbane's far post.

Over the next two minutes a furious raiding United came close with even two more chances from Zdrilic and Milicic, both failing to find the net.

United's mobile midfield quintet of ball-skilled Robbie Trajkovski, the slender 16 year old Jason Culina, 'engineer' Kresimir Marusic, the lanky Paul Bilokapic and lethal left crosser Aytec Genc had a stranglehold over the 'engine-room' where all battles are knowingly always won or lost.

Last week's standby national squad player, United's right-wingback Trajkovski, but this week upgraded into the Australian training camp in Melbourne, must have more than pleased new national manager, Terry Venables a keen observer at the match with assistant Raul Blanco.

Brisbane almost pulled a goal back in the 62nd minute. A Gary Phillips corner slung in from the left found striker Rod Brown's header slicing just wide of the back stick and in the 77th advanced central marker Mark Battistin set up substitute Chris Slater with another header which zipped safely into the grateful gloves of Kalac.

Ante Milicic: United's brilliant brace-striker.

Six minutes from the bell United completed the demolition of Brisbane when Marusic cut a ball back for Milicic to murder the net, going in off the near post, and in the 88th Zdrilic smacked in a rebound following a fierce on-target Milicic drive that 'keeper Ross could only parry.

Brisbane's player-coach Frank Farina later lamented:

"No excuses, frustration took over and we just didn't play well enough to win the game and were beaten by a better team. It was a mirror image in reverse of our first game against them last week, they fought tonight and won all battles.

"Completely two different games and I firmly believe you just have to have a big enough and strong enough squad to go all the way. Losing Sean Cranney with injury at training during the week, Kasey Werhman to the Youth squad in Tahiti and tonight having both Hunter and Troy Cranney coming off in the first half with further injuries, ultimately took its toll", ended the down to earth and former World Cup striking campaigner.

Meanwhile United's coach Branko Culina although pleased was philosophical in stating:

"We decided to leave last week's game up there in Brisbane and were much more hungrier and enthusiastic tonight. Last week we waited for things to happen but tonight, it was us that made things happen even though we missed Mark Babic and Ante Moric through suspensions.

"I also firmly believe that Brisbane will be well there at the end of the season for the Play Offs as they are a hard side to control", concluded Culina.

Sydney United: Kalac: Trajkovski, Kupresak, Enes, Rudan: Culina, (Cvetko 71st), Bilokapic (Markovac 78th), Genc: Milicic, Marusic, Zdrilic.
Brisbane Strikers: Ross: Wright, Gwynne, Hunter: (Battistin 13th), Tollenacre (Slater 61st), Harris, Phillips, T.Cranney (Hews 43rd), Brayshaw: Farina, Brown.

Scorers: Milicic 13th and 84th, Genc 21st, and Zdrilic 88th.
Yellow Cards: Wright 31st, Farina 47th and 75th, Slater 71st, all for Brisbane Strikers.
Red Cards: Farina 75th (B.S.).
Referee: S.Micalief.
Crowd: 10,560.
P.O.Y. 3-Milicic (S.U.), 2-Rudan (S.U.), Gwynne (B.S.)

PERTH SETTLE FOR DRAW

Perth Glory 1 — Marconi Fairfield 1

By RICHARD KREIDER

The gates were locked on an impressive record 17,582 crowd at Perth Oval last Sunday, where Perth Glory secured a 1-1 draw with Marconi, a result that more than satisfied Glory coach Gary Marocchi despite his team's unusually flat performance and slipping to fourth place on the Ericsson Cup standings.

"We are pretty happy to have taken four out of six points from a team like Marconi," said Marocchi who jets out for England and Italy this week during the two week intermission, to catch up on the latest training programs.

"I believe we came of age today. In the past, teams were able to come at us straight after scoring, but not now," he said.

And even though Bobby Despotovski has now gone four games without finding the net, the talented front-liner proved yet again that his Socceroo debut is just around the corner following a dazzling display, especially the quality of his distribution.

"Bobby was brilliant, in fact he was miles ahead of a couple of the national stars that were on display," said Marocchi.

Marconi were on the back foot even before the opening whistle, after Bob Catlin sustained a training injury the previous day and were forced to fly over their second goalkeeper Les Pogliacomi. But as it turned out, Pogliacomi performed well considering his swift introduction to the Perth Oval cauldron that was overflowing with the second highest attendance for a Soccer match in Perth, some 3,000 behind the 20,600 gate that saw WA tackle Manchester United at the WACA ground thirty years ago.

Sunday's bumper audience was made the more remarkable by the fact there were over nearly 28,000 at the WACA to watch an Australia-West Indies cricket match and an estimated 80,000 at a sardine festival in Fremantle.

Marconi could not have wished for a better start, when just seconds into the match, Dale Wingell provided Andrew Harper with a gift ball thirty metres from goal, but Vinko Buljubasic was quick to snuff out the threat with a timely interception.

Another defensive error in the 15th minute, this time by Craig Naven, gave Sean Babic a chance to goal from close range, but Vince Matassa did well to parry the stinging strike.. Three minutes further on, Naven redeemed himself by coming close to opening the score with a long-range effort that whistled just over the top. The end to end tussle continued into the 21st minute when Francis Awaritefe had a penalty claim ignored by referee Eugene Brazzale, after he was challenged awkwardly by Matassa. Moments later at the other end. Pogliacomi needed two attempts to hold a fierce Paul Strudwick grass-cutter that very nearly ended up in the net through his legs. The best scoring opportunity for the first-half fell to Marconi's Dominic Longo who headed a 30th minute Luke Casserly corner wide of an open net, after Matassa mistimed an aerial dual.

The deadlock was eventually broken in the 59th minute when Despotovski carved an opening for Strudwick, who then skilfully chipped the ball over the advancing Pogliacomi for his seventh goal of the season.

After Brad Maloney muffed a golden equalising opportunity ten minutes later, it was left up to Harper to save Marconi from a second defeat by the National League rookies, when he headed home a searching far post centre by Rob Stanton in the 75th minute.

Spurred on by their passionate audience, Perth once again came perilously close to scoring yet another late winner, when in the 83rd minute Despotovski headed a Vas Kalogeracos left-side cross onto an upright. The rebound fell kindly to substitute Doug Ithier who elected for power rather than placement and consequently directed his close range shot onto the same post.

Andy Harper: Stallions skipper and scorer.

Perth Glory: Matassa, C Naven, Wilkinson, Buljubasic, G Naven, Miller, McVittie, Strudwick, Despotovski, Kalogeracos, D Wingell (Ithier 71).
Marconi Fairfield: Pogliacomi, Stanton, Bingley, Casserly, Harper, Foster, Maloney (Ravanello 71), Longo, Robertosn, Babic, Awaritefe (Hristodoulou 78).
Goals: Perth: Strudwick (59). Marconi: Harper (75).
Yellow Cards: Perth: Buljubasic (49). Marconi: Stanton (17), Longo (43), Babic (88).
Referee: E Brazzale.
Crowd: 17,582.
POY: 3-Despotovski (PG), 2-Longo (MF), 1-Strudwick (PG).

ERICSSON CUP MATCH REPORTS

A MELBOURNE STALEMATE

Collingwood Warriors 0 — By DWYGHT TUFFNELL — South Melbourne 0

Collingwood Warriors couldn't overturn a 4-0 defeat last week by South Melbourne when the Lakers held them to a goalless draw at Victoria Park on Sunday. The result doesn't really help either side although South are much better placed than the Warriors going into the two week break for the Optus World Soccer Series. Collingwood languish at second bottom of the table whilst the Lakers are in the top six, a good achievement considering their disasterous start.

This Collingwood performance was a much improved one from last Sunday's game where they were simply outclassed by the rampant Lakers.

They had the better chances of the first half but had absolutely nothing to show for it. Their intentions were made clear as early as the 2nd minute when Goran Lozanovski crossed for Kimon Taliadoros to volley towards goal. Ernie Tapai's poor first touch let him down in the 26th minute when he was picked out all alone running into the box by Carlo Talladira.

Although they were not clear cut chances, the Warriors were disappointed they couldn't make more of them. Lozanovski was a bit greedy with another good chance soon before half time. He and two other Warriors were faced by two South defenders, but instead of passing to either Con Boutsianis or Kimon Taliadoros, Lozanovski opted to shoot and had the ball cleared by Nick Orlic.

The second half however, belonged to South Melbourne. Warren Spink had a chance to add to the two goals he scored last week, but he could only head against the bar following David Clarkson's corner. Orlic had the chance to score another goal for the season when he followed up on Spink's header, but Orlic headed wide.

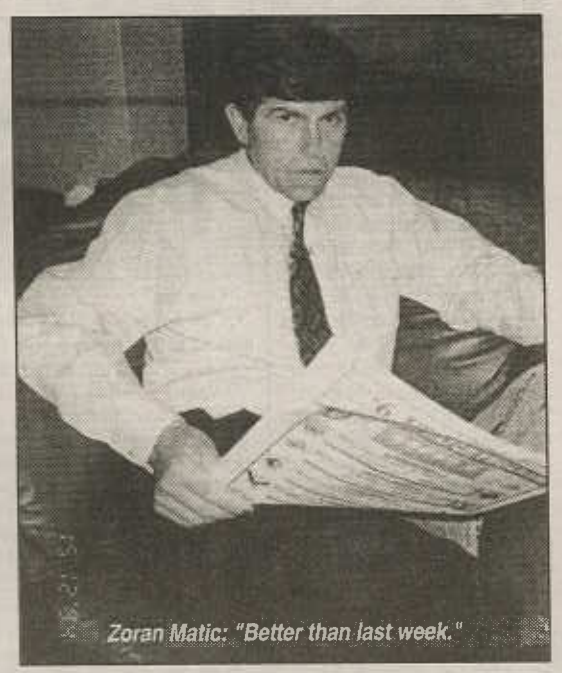
In between South's chances, Collingwood had little half chances but their wayward finishing would suggest that they have perhaps forgotten how to score. Jason Polak though, wasted the chance of the game in the 69th minute. An unbelievable solo run, in which he beat three Warriors defenders, left him one on one with Frank Juric, but the Warriors custodian had the shot blocked.

Warriors coach Zoran Matic conceded that this performance was a little bit better than last week, but still not good enough.

"We need to be more stable at the back and to create more chances, clear cut chances.If we have twenty chances a game, we can't miss them all can we?"

South coach Angie Postecoglou looks forward to the break to give his players a chance to get over some niggling injuries.

"We're probably a win away from where I wanted to be but having said that, after our first five games, if I was told we'd be comfortably in the six, I'd have taken it."


Zoran Matic: "Better than last week."

Warriors: Juric, Talladira, Fak, Vrkic, Cerracchio, Scott, Boutsianis (MacNicol 80), Tapai, Lozanovski, Taliadoros, Vlahos.

Lakers: Petkovic, Orlic, Kuzmanovic, Polak, Panopoulos, Trimboli (Petersen 84), Spink (Coveny 74), Iosifidis, Clarkson, Kelic, De Amicis.

☆ ☆ ☆

Yellow cards: Collingwood: Vlahos (17), Tapai (49), Taliadoros (58), Talladira (64). South: Iosifidis (9).
Referee: E Lennie.
Crowd: 6,000.
POY: 3-Scott (CW), 2-Orlic (SM), 1-Tapai (CW).

NEWCASTLE v ADELAIDE CITY

Newcastle Breakers 1 — By DANE SKAFTE — Adelaide City 1

Newcastle Topper Breakers recorded their eighth draw of the season last Friday night when they were held to a 1-1 draw by visiting Adelaide City at Breakers Stadium. The Newcastle community came out in droves to catch a glimpse of new Australian coach, Terry Venables.

The 5,834 vocal crowd, the biggest home crowd all season, were shown a fine display by several of the National players.

The Zebras opened the account mid-way through the first half when striker John Gibson collected a ball from half way, outpaced several of the Breakers' defenders and shot from just outside of the area. It was parried away by Liam Baker into the path of another Adelaide player then flicked back to Gibson who made no mistake with his second attempt sending the Newcastle keeper in the wrong direction.

The Breakers had a golden opportunity in the 35th minute when Jason Bennett sprinted down the wing, but his shot was blocked by Adelaide keeper Jason Petkovic.

The second half proved more lively with the Breakers producing a more attacking style of soccer. Newcastle were awarded a penalty five minutes after the break when striker Liam McGuire was fouled by Petkovic in the area. Referee, Derek Crawford pointed to the spot despite the obvious disappointment from the keeper. Defender Shane Pryce converted for the Breakers.

The equaliser gave Newcastle plenty of spirit and the game began to liven up. Striker Harry James was brought on for Bennett with 15 minutes remaining in the match but James could not find the winning goal.

A very disappointed Zebras coach John Nyskohus said that his team should have won the game in the first half, "We had several opportunities but could not finish off, we controlled the game well tonight and we have one of the strongest defences in the Ericsson Cup."

TROY HALPIN: Newcastle Breakers

Newcastle: Baker, Pryce, Richie, Ironside, Thomas, Halpin, McManus, Roberts, Bennett (James 76), Austin, McGuire.

☆ ☆ ☆

Adelaide City: Petkovic, Armour, Yates, Ivanovic, Tobin, Costanzo, Mennillo, Gibson, Musitano (Dodd 76), Brooks, Brazzale.

Scorers: Newcastle: Pryce (50 pen). Adelaide: Gibson (23).
Yellow Cards: Newcastle: Richie (40), Pryce (43), Austin (72), Thomas (75). Adelaide City: Yate (23), Brazzale (61).
Red Cards: Nil.
Referee: D Crawford
Crowd: 5,834
POY: 3-Halpin (NTB), 2-Brazzale (AC), 1-McGuire (NTB).

MANFRED SCHAFER

CRAIG FOSTER

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SPECIAL FEATURES

Ericsson Cup Coach Manfred Schaefer, Youth Officer Tom McCulloch. Marconi Fairfield Stars: Craig Foster, Vlado Zoric, Dominic Longo, Brendan Renaud. PLUS MANY MORE GUEST APPEARANCES FROM THE **STALLIONS**

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Successful Aussie Coaches

Dear Sir

The Ericcson Cup 96/97 has reached half time and one of the most pleasing but unacknowledged aspects has been the emergence of a new wave of successful Australian coaches. Nearly all the leading National League clubs are coached by new or relatively new (at this level) coaches. While it may be a bit early to single out anyone in particular the NSL clubs have long needed an infusion of new blood into the coaching ranks. Better still some of these rookie coaches are mindful of the need to play attractive Football as well as win matches.

In the case of Frank Farina, who basically has the same squad as his predecessor, perhaps his success owes something to the fact that he is an Aussie, familiar with local conditions who fully understands the Queensland mentality thus enabling him to get the best out of his players most of whom are Queensland born. Added to this is his experience as a professional player in Europe which made him worldy and wise to the ways of Football at a high level.

The success of Farina and the other newer coaches only convinces me even more that the selection of Oz Tel at great cost to be a part-time 'remote control' Socceroo coach is sheer folly.

Diverging somewhat to our 'maestro' David Hill's boast that he would transform Soccer into a mainstream Australian sport. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly (to me) the message has not registered with the good people of Gippsland, Canberra, Brisbane SE QLD, Newcastle or the Collingwood AFL fans.

The real crowd figures for Gippsland and Canberra home games can only be described as disastrous. Brisbane's suspect crowd figures are disappointing and ominous. Newcastle crowds are below par and the Collingwood Warriors crowds are so bad that at least twice thus far real crowd figures have dipped below 2000 at Victoria Park.

Perhaps instead of spending so much of his time jet-setting around the globe our 'maestro' could better spend more time in 'beautiful downtown' Morwell, Canberra, Brisbane, Newcastle and Melbourne making his boast a reality instead of an empty gesture. The 'maestro' never tires of telling the local Soccer fraternity of his love and devotion for the game. In the circumstances one would assume he would instinctively do the right thing. I cannot finish without applauding the success of Perth Glory and Wollongong Wolves. Hopefully their success will be sustainable in the long term. As well a special mention to South Melbourne and UTS Olympic who despite indifferent form at times have managed to retain their support base. There is a message here for the 'Brains Trust at SA' but I doubt if they are capable of understanding it.

Happy New Year to all Soccer fans keeping in mind the old saying BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS.

R Melor,
BONDI, NSW.

MORE CLUBS

Dear Sir,

Henry Wizgier's suggestion of a one club per city league (ABSW 24/12/12) is ridiculous.

Sydney and Melbourne "super clubs" would dominate and, as spectators want to see competitive matches with a variety of teams, numbers would quickly drop off. Sydney has three good teams, all in the western suburbs. Where would the thirty odd surplus players move to? It is up to each existing club to widen their community base. There is scope, however, for a fourth authentic "true blue" Sydney team in another area of the city. In Melbourne, Carlton could be the equivalent.

The issue is that the Australian public is not very attached or attracted to soccer. They have neither the passion nor the life long attachment and love affair that "immigrants" develop for the World game.

Perhaps Soccer Australia should conduct market research to understand what would entice mainstream Australians to club games?

David Wood,
GLEBE, NSW.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Dear Sir,

I could not agree more with Chris Kunz (Jan 7/97) for the need to have a Players Code of Conduct. Each week you can see undisciplined Ericsson Cup players committing blatant fouls or unsporting behaviour.

A lot of the blame for this behaviour must fall on the referees and their inconsistency in handling a game. To me and others, I am sure at times it is quite obvious that favours are given to some high profile players. I feel the refereeing standard has fallen, especially the inability by some linesmen to report foul play. I suggest that Soccer Australia look at some of the inconsistency of referreeing and their bias towards some clubs instead of wasting time on Brisbane Strikers' immature grievances. As a coach of junior players I find it frustrating to see such conduct each week. Players and officials must act in a professional manner for soccer to grow to its potential.

Ted Lange,
SYDNEY, NSW.

Letters to the Editor

Have your say on any soccer issue in the world. Preference will be given to short letters. Include daytime phone number for verification.

The Editor,
AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY
PO BOX 155,
MARRICKVILLE
NSW 2204
Fax: (02) 9550-9332

Short letters of about 400 words will be given preference in this column.

The opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of this newspaper

PERTH MISSES OUT

Dear Sir,

Can anyone explain why Canberra was picked as an Olympic host city for the 2000 games and Perth missed out altogether?

What is the logic of Canberra hosting a group of matches with its 2 to 3 thousand soccer followers of the Cosmos, which would be about 4 to 5 thousand if they were leading the comp. Canberra like Newcastle is only a 2.5 hr drive to Sydney, and true soccer fans could go to Sydney to watch Australia and other countries play live and return the same day.

With Perth, its population is 1.25 million (4 times that of Canberra, unless your are rich and can fly over, you do not have a hope of seeing these games.

Furthermore, with soccer competing with other sports, the chance of seeing it live on TV is minimal (unless Optus and Foxtel put an extra channel on!). Is it the cost of flying out teams to the other side of the country that is the main problem? Or is it the lack of a decent stadium? The full houses they would get in Perth would more than compensate for the extra expense of flying out teams to Perth. No, it has to be more than that. It is to do with the politics of soccer in this country. If this is true then it stinks! The people of Perth deserve to have a group of matches played there instead of Canberra, as their local side the Glory is the best supported in the league so far, and it will stay that way.

The reason the Perth people support their team so much, and this is across the board of all sports, is that they feel isolated out there in the West, and are not considered good enough to mix it with the "Big Boys" from the East (the South East in particular). Similar to the way that Qld. feels with the Southerners, especially from NSW in Rugby League.

It has taken 20 years for Perth to enter the competition and it will be a national disgrace if it takes another 20 years for international matches as well. Shame on those involved with the selection of the host cities.

Dominic Scullino, QLD.

We are not fooled

Dear Editor

What a joke this soccer venture by the Collingwood Football Club (CFC) is turning out to be. After impressive early form and attendances, the majority of the CFC members, whom this venture targeted, realised this team did not represent CFC but was a facade for a niche market involving a largely Greek-backed team (Heidelberg Warriors).

Initially, CFC reacted to the idea of forming a soccer team primarily because its main competitors in Melbourne, Essendon Football Club (EFC) and the Carlton Football Club expressed strong interest. While EFC and Carlton investigate the feasibility of such a move and go about it utilising modern administrative knowledge, the CFC from the outset of encompassing this project, approached it in a very blase fashion, leaving crucial decisions at the most crucial time to others.

If the CFC members are going to follow a soccer team, it must truly reflect the unique Collingwood spirit and culture. This can only happen if the team is called the Magpies and models the famous black and white jumpers. Ultimately management must devote more than a passing interest in the running of it. Lets have a true genesis of a CFC soccer team with no ties to others. The Collingwood name is not there to be used by others for hidden agendas and credibility.

With decisions by some CFC management such as this, is it no wonder that the once great CFC is slipping behind others in the membership, profit and performance stakes. You can only fool some people some of the time but you cannot fool all the people all the time.

Chris Hatzoelo
KORWEINGUBOORA, VIC.

"Will the owner of car number OMC 494 . . ."

Yellow Cards

Dear Sir,

In December, 28 games were played and 129 yellow cards and 9 red cards were shown in the NSL.

As there is no respect for the yellow card, I am wondering why we are not following Rugby League in introducing the "sin bin"! With the showing of the yellow card, the offending player must go from the field for a ten minute coolling off period.

Would you please take up this idea and persuade Soccer Australia to introduce it on a trial period for one month? If successful FIFA may adopt it too!

R. Marto, ST. MARYS.

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ERICSSON CUP MATCH REPORTS

THIRTEEN YELLOWS AND ONE RED

West Adelaide 2 — UTS Olympic 1

Goals from West Adelaide's new strike force of Jimmy Tsekinis and Hamilton Thorp gave the home side a 2-1 win over UTS Olympic in a national league match marred by 13 yellow cards.

Converted defender Thorp joined regular frontman Tsekinis in first half goals that continued Olympic's disappointing season and built on the 4-1 win by West over the Sydney team last week.

The first half hour of the game was dominated by Olympic and referee Wayne Dade, who handed out six yellow cards in that time. West's Thorp, Robbie Slager, Con Kokkoniplitis and Nathan Day were all put in the book while Norman Tome and Nick Meredith received cards for the visitors.

Olympic's dominance was rudely interrupted in the 32nd minute when West scored totally against the run of play. Tsekinis found room on the right and crossed precisely to Day, whose shot was blocked in reflex style by Olympic keeper Tony Franken, only for it to rebound into the path of Thorp, who headed into the empty net. The goal continued a career turnaround for Thorp who played the first half of the season as a central defender, but was thrown forward in the hope of using his height to complement the ground level skills of Tsekinis. The goal invigorated West and the players started to run harder in the hot conditions and play with more surety.

The second goal was added just before half-time, with Tsekinis scoring an unorthodox and lucky goal. Day laid the ball off to Frank Tibaldi on the left and his cross found its way to the speedy Sharks striker, who could not get a clean hit at the ball. However it rebounded off a defender to Tsekinis, who lying prostrate on the turf, swung a leg at the ball and put it into the net.

The promise of the opening half hour had rapidly evaporated for the visitors and coach David Ratcliffe would have been urging a good start to the second half. His troops delivered when Norman Tome scored on a breakaway move in the 52nd minute. He was unmarked just metres from goal when he headed in the Kris Trajanovski cross.

Robbie Hooker: Did not receive a yellow card.

West Adelaide: Harkness, Thorp (Cardozo 70), Slager, Hooker, Castro, Aloisi, Kokkinoplitis, Day, Tibaldi, Tsekinis, Artone (Pezos 81).

☆ ☆ ☆

UTS Olympic: Franken, Barrett, Ciantar, Baillie, Tsekenis (Bove 82), Tome (Augerinos 82), Edwards, Trajanovski, Meredith, Blagojevic, Poimer (Saad 60).

Scorers: West Adelaide: Thorp (31), Tsekinis (44). UTS Olympic: Tsekenis (52).
Yellow Cards: West Adelaide: Kokkinoplitis (8), Slager (15), Thorp (24), Day (27), Tibaldi (57), Tsekinis (60), Aloisi (67), Castro (68). UTS Olympic: Trajanovski (15), Meredith (15), Tome (22), Bove (90).
Red Cards: Castro: (72).
Referee: W Dade.
Crowd: 4,592.

AROK IS NOT PLEASED

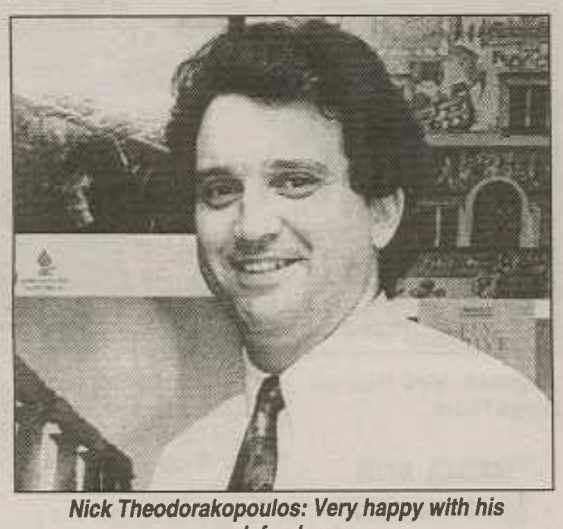
Gippsland Falcons 1 — Wollongong City 3

Wollongong City, for the second week in succession, defeated a fighting but unlucky Gippsland Falcons 3-1 in their Ericsson Cup encounter at Falcons Park. It was the Wolves first away win of the season.

Following the 5-2 drubbing they received last week at Wollongong the Falcons were pumped up for revenge, but just could not come up with the goods.

The home side badly missed captain and top goal scorer Eddie Krncevic in attack. He has not recovered from a hamstring injury suffered against Wollongong last week.

The game was an unspetactular but tough encounter with tight man to man marking being the feature of the day. Referee Con Diomis handed out no fewer than seven yellow cards with Gippsland's Marcus Stergiopoulos sent off at the 53rd minute for his second bookable offence. Wollongong's substitute Michael Kariamis suffered the same fate later in the game.



Nick Theodorakopoulos: Very happy with his defenders.

All four goals were scored in the second half with Sasho Dimovski giving the visitors the lead from a build up initiated by Alvin Ceccoli.

In the 66th minute Antony Surjan made it 2-0 for the visitors, scoring from a set up by Richard Lloyd.

With seven minutes to go Nick Joseski took advantage of a defence mistake and made it three for the Wolves.

A dejected Gippsland coach Frank Arok said after the game he wished to apologise to all Gippsland supporters for the sheer stupidity of players like Stergiopoulos and others.

"I am really ashamed of the performance of my team," said Arok.

Whereas Wollongong's coach Nick Theodorakopoulos was delighted with his players.

"I am very happy with my defenders.They laid the foundation for the win."

"One cannot underestimate Gippsland especially on their home ground and for that matter no one can underestimate any team coached by Frank Arok.

"I am very happy with the win and we are looking forward to the break".

Gippsland Falcons: Kourtis, Marcina, Stergiopoulos, Mangos, Palamaras (Gimenez 67), Foy (Bell 67), Duric, Sekulic, Gotis, Hastie (Wright 67), Tricarico.

☆ ☆ ☆

Wollongong City: Broadbeck, Ceccoli, Vanechond (Kariamis 10), Horsley, Sevin (Bourke 78), Dimoski, Reda (Chipperfield 68), Harlock, Joseski, Lloyd, Surjan.

Scorers: Gippsland: Sekulic (89). Wollongong: Dimoski (50), Surjan (65), Chipperfield (84).
Yellow Cards: Gippsland: Stergiopoulos (10), Tricarico (87), Wright (89). Wollongong: Reda (16), Kariamis (27), Bourke (85).
Red Cards: Gippsland: Stergiopoulos (55). Wollongong: Kariamis (66).
Referee: C Diomis.
Crowd: 2,754.

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KNIGHTS RIDE OVER COSMOS

BY GRAHAM COOKE

Canberra Cosmos 2 — Melbourne Knights 4

Melbourne Knights coach Ian Dobson laid it on the line to his players before the Ericsson Cup match with Canberra Cosmos.

"This is the best side we can put on the park this season. If we can't win tonight we never can." The Knights responded with an opportunistic 4-2 win at Bruce Stadium, keeping their hopes of a finals place alive.

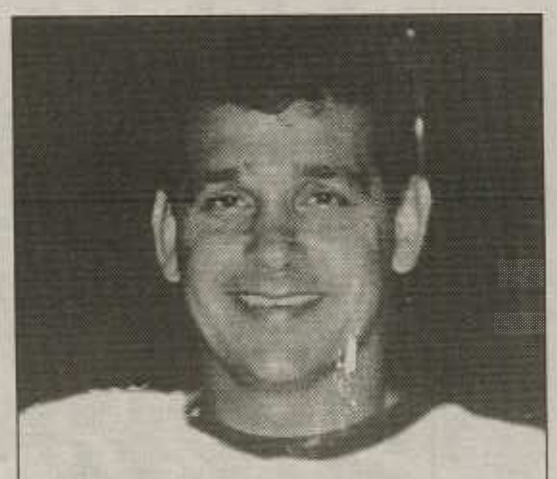
Ice Kutlesovski gave the Knights the lead in the fourth minute under somewhat fortunate circumstances. The ball was played in from the left and fell to Adrian Cervinski, whose wild swing sliced across the front of the goal to the unmarked Kutlesovski at the far post. His shot gave debut-making goalkeeper Barney Smith no chance.

A dreadful mistake by the former Canberra based defender Joe Simunic let the Cosmos back into the game after 22 minutes. Simunic hesitated in possession just outside the penalty area then under-struck a backpass to goalkeeper Joe Didulica. That was too good an opportunity to miss for Cosmos' George Sorras who nipped in between the two Knights players and struck his shot firmly along the ground into the corner of the net.

Indifferent defence cost Canberra dearly in the opening minutes of the second half. First a strong run forward by Ransford Banini was not dealt with, and the Ghanian was able to set up Kutlesovski for the Knights' second.

Eight minutes later Smith was badly positioned to take a speculative chip shot from Cervinski and saw the ball go over his head into the net.

Canberra was given a lifeline when substitute Peter Buljan was bought down in the penalty area and Norman Kelly scored from the split, but Cervinski settled matters, leaving the home defence flat footed as he ran through to score.



Ian Dobson: "If we can't win tonight — we never can." They won.

Dobson said his side had moved to the ball quickly and made some fine defence-splitting runs.

"We were helped by Canberra who seemed intent on playing it very square at the back," he said.

New national coach Terry Venables was at the game and could not have failed to be impressed by the livewire opportunism of Kutlesovski and Cervinski.

Canberra Cosmos: Smith, Dee, Kelly, Armstrong, Perinovic, Grella, Koch, Mazis, Sorras (Milin 79), Juric, Moreno (Buljan 46).
Melbourne Knights: Didlucia, D Cervinski, Marth, Simunic, Lapasansky, Kutlesovski, Pondeljak, Kovacevic, Duzel (Deak 74), Banini, A Cervinski.
Scorers: Cosmos: Sorras (22), Kelly (pen 67). Knights: Kutlesovski (4, 53), Cervinski (61, 76).
Yellow cards: Cosmos: Mazis (14), Armstrong (43), Buljan (86). Knights: Duzel (20), Cervinski (55).
Referee: Connolly.
Crowd: 3,127.
POY: 3-Kutlesovski (MK), 2-Cervinski (MK), 1-Banini (MK).

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PERTH GLORY PERTH GLORY PERTH GLORY PERTH GLORY

TOWARDS A GLORIOUS FUTURE

BY JODEE ROGERS

Perth Glory, one of the newest arrivals in the Ericsson Cup national Soccer league are creating history with their fanatical home crowd and consistent good form home and away.

We set out to discover more about the latest Soccer sensation that is taking Australia to new heights and found ourselves swept away by the tide that is Perth Glory.

WA SOCCER HISTORY

The game of Soccer in Perth began 'officially' on 13 of May 1896 when the "Western Australian British Football Association" (WABFA) was first established by a group of influential businessman and aspiring politicians.

Gary Marocchi - Off to Europe to view training techniques of top clubs including AC Milan and Bologna

Four clubs had registered ten days later, to participate in the first WABFA season. They were Perth Association FC, Civil Services FC, Fremantle Wanders FC and the Crusaders FC. The first match between Perth and Civil was played on the 30th May.

Fortnightly matches were held and clashes between the top teams, Perth and Fremantle especially, saw crowds regularly reach 500 people.

In 1912 there were eight clubs competing in the league. Spectator numbers were now between 800 and 2,000. By 1953 the number of clubs competing in the renamed Western Australian Soccer Federation had risen to thirty three.

From those beginnings one hundred years ago, the game of Soccer has grown in Western Australia with over eighteen thousand people playing throughout the State.

HISTORY OF PERTH GLORY

In the early nineties, Nick Tana, the chairman and co-owner of Perth Glory raised the question of Western Australia entering the national scene, whilst watching Australia play New Zealand at Olympic Park in Melbourne. At the start of the 1996/97 season he finally saw that question answered.

The name, logo and distinctive colours of orange and purple have drawn widespread attention. They were chosen to symbolise the beginning of a new era for Soccer in Western Australia and a new approach to the league.

Uniting the people of Western Australia through a shared passion for the game is one of the main objectives of the Club. It also means that for once, players can stay in their own State and play for their own team.

Other clubs are now watching and listening to Perth Glory. In one year, they have come from being non-existent to being watched with interest by the whole of the Soccer community.

Ericsson Cup General Manager, Stefan Kamasz, who was at the game against Wollongong City said the advice to the rest of the clubs should be, "Let's follow Perth Glory."

Of being there, he said the atmosphere was fantastic and not only was the game exciting but the day as a whole was great for the fans starting with the pre-match entertainment. He said those elements were as much a part of the day as the game itself and stated that it was the sort of promotion that other clubs should be adopting.

The presidents of all the other Ericsson Cup teams sat up and took notice when Nick Tana spoke of the need for Soccer to become broader based or risk dying.

HOME GROUND

The two year agreement to share Perth Oval with East Perth Football Club runs out after the last fixture in the present competition, which could bring about the possibility that Glory will be denied the opportunity to stage a home final.

Stefan Kamasz said he had no doubts that there would be a fantastic crowd for a final game, and SA will be keeping close tabs on what happens and if need be will help in securing a suitable venue.

Soccer Australia and the State Government of WA have held talks about the possibility of building a proper venue for Soccer and several sites have been put forward. Paul Afkos, Vice Chairman of the club, said that they are committed to their lease for one more year with the option on a further year but hoped that within three years a new home would be ready.

The crowds at Perth Oval have become a major talking point of the current Ericcson Cup season. They chant, "Glory, Glory, Glory" for up to an hour before the game begins.

Support by the broader community of WA has taken Glory by surprise. People who have never been to Soccer matches before are now committed fans and busloads come from all over the State to watch home games.

Halfway through the season, the crowd average stands at 10,911 per game with a total of 76,376 fans having seen them play at home so far.

For the clash against UTS Olympic at Belmore Oval on February 2, it is rumoured that already over one hundred fans from Perth have booked airline tickets to be there.

Nick Tana wants to see memberships double each year for the next five years. At present Perth Glory have nearly 1,000 members and within 12 months Mr Tana would like to see that double to 2,000, and keep on doubling year after year.

PROFESSIONALISM

Soccer Australia has given a time frame of five years for all clubs to employ full time players. Perth Glory want to lead the push towards full time professionalism in Australian Soccer and may possibly implement it as early as next season. At present a third of their players are virtually full timers. They train twice a day and are also involved in club promotions.

The management, players and fans of Perth Glory were particularly disappointed that none of them had been selected in the squad or even as standby, especially Bobby Despotovski who is currently second leading goal scorer in the Ericsson Cup.

This week, Glory's Coach, Gary Marocchi will fly out to Milan to study the training methods of AC Milan. Marocchi, who played for Adelaide City in the late 1970s and early 1980s, states that this is another example of how progressive Perth Glory is.

As well as looking at techniques and tactics utilised by AC Milan he will also be viewing the methods at Bologna. The Directors of Bologna were recently in Australia and watched Perth in several of their games.

Whilst on his three week visit of Europe he will also be looking at English clubs Tottenham, West Ham and Crystal Palace.

Bobby Despotovski [illegible] Western Australian Soccer

MEDIA AND SPONSORSHIP

The media in Perth have been extremely supportive with articles in the West Australian Daily usually receiving full page editorials together with colour photos. The Sunday Times also publish full pages while on the Television and Radio Stations Perth Glory are often the lead story in the Sports news.

Sponsorship is way ahead of the budget. Most sponsors are considered to be quality corporate companies and these include Coca Cola, Chicken Treat, Swan Brewery and Bankwest.

David Hill who was at the recent game against Melbourne Knights stated that it was his most satisfying moment since becoming involved in Soccer Australia and declared that Perth and their spectators should have been in the league 20 years ago.

Mr Hill said that Glory were now setting a revolutionary pace as well as new standards in the Ericsson Cup. He spoke of how Soccer Australia had been urging teams to broaden their support base in an effort to get the game into mainstream society.

He said Perth had appealed beyond one ethnic community and had now set a marvellous example for the other teams to follow.

ANOTHER NEW RECORD

Perth were home to Marconi this weekend, a game that was played out in front of 17,582 people and ended in a 1-1 draw.

Are Perth the team of the future? You decide for yourself.

Perth Glory - Is this the way of the future?

VENABLES & BLANCO PREPARE AUSTRALIA

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

Australia's new manager, Terry Venables, together with assistant and Olympic 2000 Games coach Raul Blanco, yesterday (Monday) at long last finally assembled their squad of 22 players in Melbourne.

Venables and Blanco have quickly set up their training camp headquarters at the Park Royal on St Kilda.

The watching of games and spotting times are over. For them both.

Now it's down to the real hungry and sweaty business of working in their tracksuits on the training pitch with the material they have collected.

The coaching duo has just less than five days in which to weld and knock into shape a strong, fluid, yet unyielding Australian side that will compete in the four-nation 'Optus World Soccer Series' kicking off this Saturday at the Bob Jane Stadium in Melbourne.

This clash will be followed by double headers on Wednesday week at the Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane, with the final round of double headers on Saturday week at Sydney's Football Stadium.

THE NEW SKIPPER

Australia's opponents are New Zealand, South Korea and Norway.

First step, and a most vital one, was to select Paul Wade's successor as skipper of Australia.

As hopefully expected the highly experienced Alex ('Beethoven') Tobin, quietly spoken but loud in action, was wisely last Sunday night entrusted with the 'Green and Gold Stripes'.

THE MANAGER AND COACH

Venables stated to ABSW: "We have some good players here (domestic), and I already know that this country has some excellent players abroad.

"It now remains to get a good squad together. Norway for example gives little away and have lost very few games over the last two or three years.

"They want you to press them so they can catch you on the break.".

ABSW also approached Blanco for a comment, who wisely stated:

"It's a new era for Australia. This squad of players we have assembled has the marvellous and fantastic opportunity over the next two weeks in camp, and during the Soccer Series, to grab a real chance to deliver their ability we know they possess, against three formidale international opponents.

"Australia's World Cup qualifiers are not that far away. We must never forget that New Zealand, twice before, (1982 and 1989) was able to eliminate Australia from progressing to World Cup finals.

"Obviously for anyone at all to believe that Australia is already in France would be totally irresponsible", ended Venables' right hand man.

Raul Blanco and Terry Venables — yet again facing the media.

Jason Petkovic: Strongly pushing Zelijko Kalac for the 'national gloves'.

Last week-end Venables and Blanco in a whirlwind triangular tour across two States took in no less than three consecutive matches.

The dynamic duo ran their eagle eyes over more than 70 players locked in Ericsson League clashes.

FIERCE BATTLE FOR SPOTS

Over the next few days fierce battles will take place between squad members for a starting strip over all zones across the pitch.

For example, fighting for the 'keeper's gloves will be Sydney United's experienced and towering international Zeljko Kalac who is being strongly challenged by the electric-reflexed Jason Petkovic from Adealide City.

The right wing-back spot possibly could see Marconi's mobile Matthew Bingley fighting it out with Sydney United's ball-skilled Robbie Trajkovski.

Who will partner Alex Tobin in front of World Cup maestro sweeper Milan Ivanovic?

THE SPINE

Every good team, club or national, must have a strong and flexible spine.

This is an essential zone ... priority No 1.

A battle royale, (in the absence of the lanky and cultured, but injured Tony Popovic who is Japan-bound in two weeks), as the second central marker could erupt between Sydney United's Mark Babic and Marconi's pair, Dominic Longo or even Luke Casserly at this early stage.

One thing is almost sure, one Paul ('Trimmers') Trimboli is virtually a must. Either as playmaker in the 'engine-room' or upfront as a 'box-man' sniffing or holding up ... 'Trimmers' is the man.

Can one easily forget how he single handedly ripped New Zealand apart in Newcastle two years back when Eddie Thomson's lads dropped the durable Kiwis 3-0?

Venables unfortunately, to date, has still not seen Trimboli, arguably Australia's most intelligent and constructive player, in full fury.

Alistair Edwards and Robbie Hooker could be vying for the left wingback spot. And so it goes on.

There is a wealth of talented material at Venables' disposal to blend into a solid, hard-cored, but fluid unit.

Midfielders of the calibre of Jason Polak, Craig Foster, Robbie Enes and Aytec Genc will all be razor-keen bustling to impress the two men in tracksuits standing on the sidelines ... WATCHING.

By Saturday week, at the Sydney Football Stadium when the curtain comes down on this 'Optus World Soccer Series', most of the above questions will have been answered.

Tickets for the 'Optus World Soccer Series' are now on sale — for outlets refer to Page 13 advert..

MARCONI'S YOUTH OFF TO VIAREGGIO

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

Marconi's crack Youth team, coached by former and well-experienced NSL enforcing-sweeper Lee Sterrey, for the second consecutive year has been invited to compete in Europe's annual prestigious 'International Youth Tournament -Viareggio', in Italy.

The "Viareggio Youth Tournament " will again be fiercely competed for with no less than 32 nations taking part, each sending one of their top Youth club teams to Italy.

The once again ambitious Marconi Youth crusade to Italy will cost over $100,000 including airlift, accommodation, registration and insurance.

Marconi's task has been made ever-so-difficult being drawn in Group Two.

Group Two embraces Marconi's youngsters alongside the frightening giant names of powerful Manchester United, Udinese and Torino.

At a special and lavish farewell dinner staged last Saturday night at Club Marconi, coach Lee Sterrey released his final squad of 18 that will fly out for Italy, departing Sydney's international airport on Thursday week.

In announcing his final squad, Mr Sterrey emphasised the most painfully-laborious task he experienced in making his final selection.

This he explained as being the very reason in making his late announcement: "Obviously I would love to have taken all my players but I'm heavily restricted by the Tournament's regulations.

"It's a highly valuable tour and hopefully we all, as a unit, will learn enormously from it as we have been pitted against mega-world names such as Manchester United and Torino.

"To give you just some idea of how big and powerful this Youth Tournament is, teams have been entered by Juventus, Espanol Barcelona, Inter Milan, A.C.Milan, Borussia Dortmund, Napoli, Parma, Ajax Amsterdam, Fiorentina and Slavia Praga.

"I can assure you all that Club Marconi are highly honoured to again have been invited to this magical, prestigious event," ended Mr Sterrey.

The young Marconi squad will be managed by Senior Soccer Administrator, Mr Frank Labbozzetta. Making the final cut of 18, are:

GOALKEEPERS: Les Pogliacomi and Robbie DeBrincat.
DEFENDERS: Daniel Ucchino, Buddy Farah, Michael Galluzzo, Michael Cunico and Peter Krljar,

MIDFIELDERS: Chris Care, Vaughan Hunter, Michael Kladis, Mark Robertson, Joe Bruni and Mark Racker.

STRIKERS: Luke Tomich, Mauro Van Coulenberg, Robbie Cicek, Andrew Daniele and Nick Bosevski.
On Standby: Anthony Arena and Scott Jeffers.

MARCONI'S 1997 YOUTH SQUAD

AROUND THE CLUBS

CLUBS CHASING 'BIG MITCH'

By JOHN ECONOMOS

David Mitchell, Australia's lanky international and globe-roving striker, is back in Australia, (Sydney in fact), wanting to settle down and play out his career with an Ericsson League club.

Without question, 'Big Mitch' over the past 14 years easily became Australia's most experienced and most travelled player.The gangling star striker has roamed abroad with his playing boots to be employed on the playing staff of the big pro-Leagues in Scotland, Germany, Holland, England, Turkey, England again, and last year with Malaysian Cup champions Selengor.

Whilst playing in the England first division after a stint with Chelsea, it was Mitchell who enticed his pal, current Australian international Alistair Edwards to join him at Millwall from Singapore. He now wishes to wind down his professional career in the Ericsson League.

"I'm married (to Adel) have two children and now want to stop travelling around and really settle down in one place, here in Australia", Mitch told ABSW last night.

"Over the years by playing in Europe, understandably I've gathered in enormous experience and I know that I still have plenty to offer on the pitch before I hopefully can get myself involved in coaching. In the meantime I would relish the idea of playing as a sweeper if possible and getting things organised at the back for some club."

Last week on learning that 'Big Mitch' was back in the country with his family, three clubs expressed urgent interest to snap up the Big Man. Perth Glory, then Newcastle Breakers and Sydney Olympic have all contacted the towering blond goalscorer, to entice him with a contract.

The former Adelaide City, then Sydney City marksman Mitchell, burst onto the international arena in spectacular fashion with Australia's Youth team back on October 3rd, 1981 at the old Sydney Sports Ground. Back then Australia hosted the third World Youth Championships.

In the opening round on that most memorable day, the tenacious and heroic galloping David Mitchell, endowed with tremendous aerial power, delivered a spectacular display to spearhead Australia's attack and send the then reigning World Champions Argentina crashing to 2-1 a defeat, which shocked the World of Soccer.

Since then Mitch has been included in Australia's last three World Cup campaigns. This week a fourth Australian Club has joined in the serious hunt for Mitchell's signature.

Raul Blanco, Adel and David Mitchell in the VIP Room and Belmore Sports Ground.

Alistair Edwards recently at a Sydney Restaurant dining with his old pal David Mitchell.

Collingwood Warriors

The loan transfer of Joe Vrkic from Sydney United may be about to be made permanent according to club president Angolo Bouzis.

"Joe is a good young player and there is a strong possibility that we will sign him" Bouzis also revealed that another player could soon be on his way to Victoria Park.

"All that I can say he is playing overseas and is well known in Australia". A well known former South Melbourne and Socceroo star, currently playing in Malaysia has been linked with the club recently and has been spotted at a number of Warriors games. Collingwood is looking at plans to quickly curtail the alarming drop in attendances at Victoria Park.

"Having 2500 people at our home games doesn't help us" said President Bouzis. "We have to wait to get some good results but we are looking at introducing some incentive schemes to attract the Melbourne public to come and watch Collingwood Warriors. The football club is also helping the Warriors out.

"Collingwood Football Club is 110% behind Collingwood Warriors, they are trying to get their supporters to get behind the Warriors" said CFC representative Rob Petrie. "The idea of this venture was to get the CFC members involved in something more than just AFL and get more use out of Victoria Park".

Petrie can see nothing wrong with the rivalry that has built up between the Warriors and South Melbourne despite the Warriors being a totally new club.

"Both clubs have connections with the Greek community, but on the other hand in the AFL, everyone loves to hate Collingwood so maybe it will happen with the soccer club aswell". Petrie says that the club is not just exclusively for the Greek community of Melbourne, saying "this has been a tradition of soccer in Australia, we are perhapsthe first club to start to move away from all that".

Kimon Taliadoros

South Melbourne

The Lakers rise from lower table obscurity to holding a strong position in the top six has not surprised coach Angie Postecoglou. Postecoglou always held belief, even in the dark, early days of the season, that the club had the players to turn things around. A place in the top four at the end of the campaign will satisfy Postecoglou, something they are well on track to achieve.

"Our aim from the start has been to finish in the top four. I've always been more than confident that once we settled down we should be aiming for a top four position., that's the calibre of players we have". However, with the league being so tight at the top, a couple of slips could have them out of the six and Postecoglou knows that they must keep winning to hold their position. Postecoglou says that there is a chance the Lakers could finish above their aim of the top four.

"The first two have got away a little bit but anything can happen if we keep winning." South Melbourne hope to have the finished details of their venture with the Sydney Swans tabled at the club's AGM some time this month. The Swans are looking to use the Laker's Champions Sports Bar as a social facility for their Melbourne based supporters.

"Hopefully we can put something in place to present to the members at the AGM" said marketing manager Barry Horsfall. "There's a number of conditions that we have offered with the facility and they're currently looking at those conditions." The Swans are currently using Flemington Racecourse as their social venue for Melbourne supporters but have found it unsuitable and need somewhere more centrally located.

"They are looking to use the social facilites here and they've also looked at the possibility of having administration based here, but that is not a top priority for them" said Horsfall.

"If we can turn this Champions Sports Bar - Club Hellas faciltiy into an all round thing it will be terrific.

"It is all about commercial dollars these days, we can't spend $1.8 million dollars on a place like this and just expect to draw revenue from soccer alone" Horsfall said.

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

The Knights' overseas search for a striker has finally been rewarded with former coach Mirko Bazic sending a player to Knights Stadium. Zvonko Kiseljak, from Mark Viduka's club Croatia Zagreb, has been unable to gain a place in the Croatian Champions' senior team. The 19 year old scored 46 goals in the reserves last season and has been recommended by Bazic, Croatia's Zagreb's director of youth coaching.

The Knights have scored just 14 goals going into the 14th round and with both Adrian Cervinski and John Markovski just getting back to full fitness, competition for places will be strong.

ERICSSON CUP

RESULTS & SCORERS

ROUND FOURTEEN

Newcastle Breakers 1
(Pryce 50 pen)
Adelaide City 1
(Gibson 23)
Crowd: 5,834

Canberra Cosmos 2
(Sorras 20, Kelly 66 pen)
Melbourne Knights 4
(Kutlesovski 3, 52, A Cervinski 60, 74)
Crowd: 13,121

Gippsland Falcons 1
(Sekulic 89)
Wollongong City 3
(Dimoski 50, Surjan 65, Chipperfield 84)
Crowd: 2,754

Perth Glory 1
(Strudwick 59)
Marconi Fairfield 1
(Harper 75)
Crowd: 17,582

Collingwood Warriors 0
South Melbourne 0
Crowd: 9,614

Sydney United 4
(Milicic 10, 80), Genc (19), Zdrilic (85)
Brisbane Strikers 0
Crowd: 5,249

West Adelaide 2
(Thorp 31, Tsekinis 44)
UTS Olympic 1
(Tome 52)
Crowd: 4,592

ATTENDANCE FIGURES FOR ROUND 13
1995/96 – 31,073
1996/97 – 54,153

David Zdrilic: Scored first goal in four matches

TABLE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sydney United	14	10	2	2	39	19	32
Brisbane Strikers	14	9	2	3	30	18	29
Wollongong City	14	6	6	2	24	17	24
Perth Glory	14	7	2	5	31	23	23
South Melbourne	14	6	4	4	18	11	22
Adelaide City	14	5	6	3	17	12	21
West Adelaide	14	6	1	7	20	26	19
Marconi Fairfield	14	5	3	6	21	21	18
Melbourne Knights	14	4	4	6	18	18	16
UTS Olympic	14	4	4	6	19	26	16
Newcastle Breakers	15	2	8	5	23	27	14
Gippsland Falcons	14	3	4	7	15	26	13
Collingwood Warriors	14	2	7	5	13	26	13
Canberra Cosmos	15	1	5	9	15	33	8

Leading Goal Scorers

NAME	TEAM	GOALS
David Zdrilic	*Sydney United*	13
Bobby Despotovski	*Perth Glory*	9
Ante Milicic	*Sydney United*	9
Norman Tome	*UTS Olympic*	8
Frank Farina	*Brisbane Strikers*	7
Rodney Brown	*Brisbane Strikers*	7
Paul Strudwick	*Perth Glory*	7
Vasili Kalogeracos	*Perth Glory*	6
Ice Kutlesovski	*Melbourne Knights*	6
Jimmy Tsekinis	*West Adelaide*	6
Jason Bennett	*Newcastle Breakers*	5
Andrew Harper	*Marconi Fairfield*	5
Adrian Cervinski	*Melbourne Knights*	5
Matthew Horsley	*Wollongong City*	5
Nick Joseski	*Wollongong City*	5
Eddie Krncevic	*Gippsland Falcons*	5
Kris Trajanovski	*UTS Olympic*	5

ROUND 15 FIXTURES

THERE WILL BE A TWO WEEK BREAK IN THE ERICCSON CUP PROGRAM DUE TO THE OPTUS FOUR NATIONS TOURNAMENT

BRISBANE STRIKERS V ADELAIDE CITY
SATURDAY 1 FEBRUARY 1997 – 7.00PM

MARCONI FAIRFIELD V CANBERRA COSMOS
SATURDAY 1 FEBRUARY 1997 - 7.00PM

WOLLONGONG CITY V SYDNEY UNITED
SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY 1997 - 6.30PM

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS V COLLINGWOOD WARRIORS
SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY 1997 - 6.00PM

SOUTH MELBOURNE V GIPPSLAND FALCONS
SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY 1997 - 6.00PM

UTS OLYMPIC V PERTH GLORY
SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY 1997 6.30PM

WEST ADELAIDE V NEWCASTLE BREAKERS
SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY 1997 - 7.30PM

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Suncorp
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22 Janu

SYDNEY
TICKETS THROUGH
TICKETEK: Phone 92664800
Sydney Football Stadium
Saturday,
25 January 1997

WORLD RESULTS & TABLES

ENGLAND
Premier League

Aston Villa	2	Newcastle	2
Yorke 39, Milosevic 52		Shearer 16, Clark 21	
Crowd: 39,339			
Blackburn	4	Coventry	0
Sutton 17, 34, Gallacher 30, Donis 76			
Crowd: 24,055			
Leeds	3	Leicester	0
Boyer 40, Rush 45, 69			
Crowd: 29,486			
Liverpool	0	West Ham	0
Crowd: 40,102			
Middlesbrough	0	Southampton	1
		Magilton 59 pen	
Crowd: 29,509			
Nottingham For	2	Chelsea	0
Pearce 40, Bart-Williams 53			
Crowd: 28,358			
Sheffield Wed	2	Everton	1
Pembridge 22, Hirst 50		Ferguson 63	
Crowd: 24,175			
Sunderland	1	Arsenal	0
Adams 66 og			
Crowd: 21,154			
Wimbledon	1	Derby	1
Gayle 60		Willems 84	
Crowd: 11,467			

Liverpool	23	12	7	4	38	20	43
Arsenal	22	11	7	4	39	21	40
Manchester Utd	21	10	8	3	42	25	38
Newcastle	22	11	5	6	40	24	38
Wimbledon	20	11	5	4	34	24	38
Aston Villa	22	10	6	6	31	21	36
Chelsea	22	9	8	5	33	31	35
Sheffield Wed	21	7	10	4	23	23	31
Everton	22	7	7	8	30	31	28
Tottenham	20	8	4	8	22	26	28
Sunderland	22	7	6	9	22	30	27
Leeds	22	7	4	11	19	27	25
Derby	21	5	9	7	21	26	24
Blackburn	21	5	8	8	23	22	23
Coventry	22	5	8	9	22	31	23
Leicester	21	6	5	10	20	30	23
West Ham	21	5	7	9	18	26	22
Nottingham For	22	4	8	10	21	36	20
Southampton	21	5	4	12	29	37	19
Middlesbrough	22	4	6	12	25	41	18

Leading Scorers

16 - Ian Wright (Arsenal), Alan Shearer (Newcastle)
12 - Dwight Yorke (Aston Villa)
11 - Robbie Fowler (Liverpool)
10 - Les Ferdinand (Newcastle)
9 - Fabrizio Ravenelli (Middlesbrough), Matthew Le Tissier (Southampton), Efan Ekoku (Wimbledon), Chris Sutton (Blackburn), Ole Gunnar Solskjaer (Manchester United)

Division one

Wolverhampton	2	West Bromwich	0
Bradford	2	Oxford	0
Grimsby	1	Port Vale	1
Manchester City	1	Crystal Palace	1
Portsmouth	0	Bolton	3
QPR	3	Barnsley	1
Reading	2	Charlton	2
Stoke	1	Birmingham	0
Tranmere	2	Swindon	1

Bolton	28	15	10	3	58	37	55
Barnsley	26	13	8	5	45	30	47
Sheffield Utd	26	13	7	6	44	28	46
Crystal Palace	26	10	10	6	50	28	40
QPR	27	11	7	9	38	36	40
Wolverhampton	25	11	7	7	34	23	40
Stoke	25	11	7	7	33	33	40
Tranmere	27	11	6	10	36	34	39
Norwich	26	11	6	9	35	36	39
Port Vale	27	9	11	7	30	27	38
Oxford	27	10	7	10	37	31	37
Huddersfield	27	9	8	10	32	35	35
Charlton	27	10	5	12	29	36	35
Ipswich	27	8	10	9	34	38	34
West Brom	26	7	12	7	43	42	33
Swindon	26	10	3	13	36	34	33
Portsmouth	28	9	6	13	30	35	33
Birmingham	24	8	9	7	24	23	33
Reading	27	7	9	11	30	39	30

Italy
1905

Italy
Serie A

Bologna	0	Parma	1
Juventus	0	Atalanta	0
Milan	1	Vicenza	0
Napoli	1	Inter	2
Piacenza	0	Udinese	0
Reggiana	0	Fiorentina	0
Roma	4	Perugia	1
Verona	1	Lazio	1

Juventus	16	8	6	2	21	12	30
Inter	16	7	7	2	25	18	28
Vicenza	16	7	5	4	25	16	26
Sampdoria	15	7	4	4	27	19	25
Fiorentina	16	6	7	3	24	16	25
Milan	16	7	3	6	23	19	24
Parma	16	6	6	4	16	14	24
Roma	16	6	5	5	26	22	23
Lazio	16	6	5	5	18	14	23
Napoli	16	6	5	5	19	22	23
Bologna	16	6	4	6	22	21	22
Atalanta	16	5	6	5	19	21	21
Udinese	16	5	4	7	23	25	19
Piacenza	16	4	6	6	15	22	18
Perugia	16	5	2	9	20	30	17
Cagliari	15	3	5	7	17	23	14
Verona	16	2	5	9	17	30	11
Reggiana	16	1	7	8	14	27	10

Serie B

C Sangro	1	Salernitana	0
Empoli	2	Genoa	1
Foggia	1	Brescia	2
Lecce	2	Pescara	1
Lucchese	0	Torino	1
Padova	1	Bari	1
Palermo	1	Cosenza	3
Ravenna	2	Cesena	0
Reggina	1	Cremonese	0
Venezia	1	Chievo	1

Lecce	17	10	5	2	29	18	35
Brescia	17	7	7	3	20	15	28
Torino	17	8	4	5	23	19	28
Pescara	17	7	6	4	23	15	27
Ravenna	17	8	6	3	23	16	27
Bari	17	5	11	1	23	13	26
Empoli	17	7	5	5	19	18	26
Padova	17	5	8	4	19	19	23
Chievo	17	5	7	5	19	19	22
Genoa	16	4	9	3	21	14	21
Lucchese	17	4	9	4	14	13	21
Foggia	17	5	5	7	17	23	20
Venezia	17	4	6	7	20	22	18
Palermo	17	3	9	5	16	20	18
Cosenza	17	4	6	7	18	24	18
Salernitana	17	4	6	7	9	16	18
Reggina	17	3	8	6	15	21	17
C Sangro	16	5	2	9	8	18	17
Cesena	17	2	8	7	13	18	14
Cremonese	17	3	5	9	10	18	14

Portugal

Belenenses	1	Guimaraes	1
Chaves	1	Espinho	0
Gil Vicente	1	Maritimo	2
Salgueiros	3	Boavista	2
Setubal	1	Rio Ave	1
Uniao Leiria	0	Farense	0
Braga	1	Leca	0
Benfica	1	Porto	2
Estrela Amadora	0	Sporting	1

Porto	15	13	2	0	33	7	41
Benfica	15	10	3	2	30	8	33
Sporting	15	9	3	3	20	7	30
Espinho	15	8	2	5	18	17	26
Braga	15	7	5	3	21	19	26
Estrela Amad	15	6	4	5	17	14	22
Setubal	15	5	7	3	19	16	22
Farense	15	5	6	4	13	12	21
Chaves	15	5	5	5	15	20	20
Boavista	15	4	6	5	21	19	18
Leca	15	5	3	7	18	20	18
Guimaraes	15	5	3	7	21	23	18
Salgueiros	15	4	6	5	19	22	18
Maritimo	15	4	5	6	16	22	17
Belenenses	15	4	4	7	18	28	16
Uniao Leiria	15	3	3	9	9	23	12
Gil Vicente	15	2	2	11	15	29	8
Rio Ave	15	0	3	12	11	28	3

Scotland

Rangers	4	Aberdeen	0
Dunfermline	1	Dundee United	3
Hearts	1	Celtic	2
Kilmarnock	0	Raith	1
Motherwell	2	Hibernian	1

Rangers	22	18	2	2	59	19	56
Celtic	21	14	3	4	53	22	45
Dundee United	23	10	6	7	31	20	36
Hearts	23	9	6	8	34	33	33
Aberdeen	23	8	6	9	32	36	30
Dunfermline	22	8	5	9	34	43	29
Hibernian	23	6	5	12	24	38	23
Motherwell	22	5	6	11	22	39	21
Kilmarnock	21	6	2	13	25	42	20
Raith	22	5	3	14	17	39	18

Spain

Extremadura	0	Real Madrid	0
Athletic Bilbao	2	Celta Vigo	2
Valladolid	1	Deportivo Coruna	1
Valencia	1	Rayo Vallecano	0
Sevilla	2	Oviedo	1
Logrones	1	Espanyol	0
Compostela	1	Racing Santander	1
Atletico Madrid	5	Zaragoza	1
Tenerife	0	Real Sociedad	1

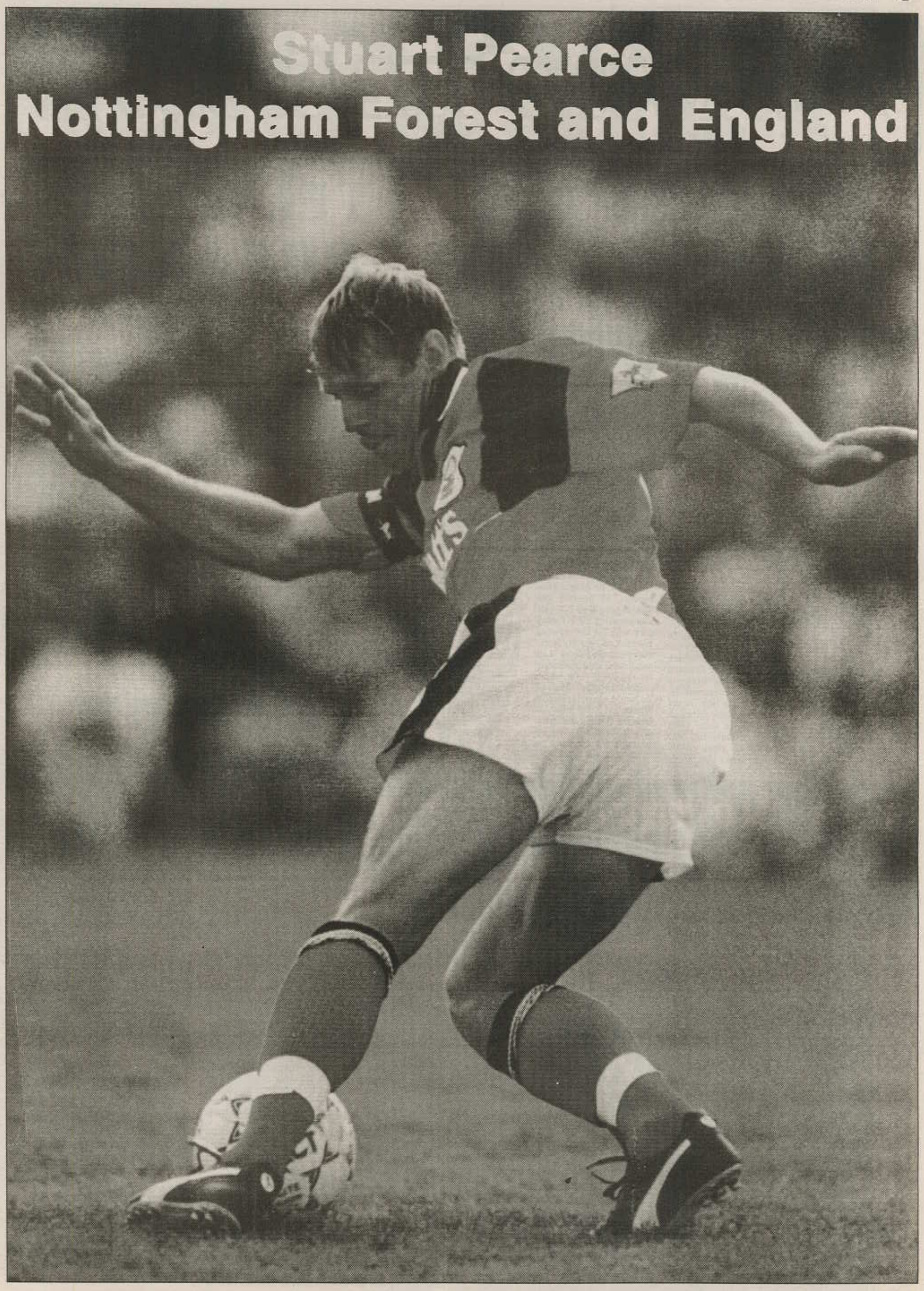
Real Madrid	19	12	7	0	35	13	43
Barcelona	18	12	4	2	48	21	40
Deport Coruna	19	10	8	1	26	10	38
Real Betis	18	10	6	2	37	15	36
Atletico Madrid	19	10	5	4	38	23	35
Real Sociedad	19	10	4	5	26	21	34
Valladolid	19	8	6	5	24	21	30
Tenerife	19	8	4	7	33	21	28
Athletic Bilbao	19	7	7	5	31	26	28
Valencia	19	8	3	8	28	24	27
Racing Santan	19	6	8	5	20	20	26
Celta Vigo	19	6	6	7	21	23	24
Rayo Vallecano	18	6	5	7	23	21	23
Oviedo	19	6	4	9	23	27	22
Compostela	19	5	5	9	17	32	20
Espanyol	19	5	4	10	21	28	19
Sporting Gijon	18	4	6	8	18	26	18
Logrones	19	5	3	11	14	42	18
Sevilla	18	5	2	11	15	27	17
Zaragoza	19	2	8	9	19	34	14
Hercules	18	3	3	12	15	33	12
Extremadura	19	1	6	12	11	33	9

Spanish Cup
Round 3

Real Madrid	2	Valladolid	1
Granada (III)	0	Real Betis	1
Villareal (II)	0	Athletic Bilbao	1
Osasuna (II)	3	Rayo Valleca	2
Celta Vigo	2	Logrones	0
Oviedo	1	Compostela	0
Zaragoza	1	Racing Santander	1
Espanyol	4	Sporting Gijon	1
Sevilla	2	Deportivo Coruna	0

Lleida (II) v Hercules postponed

Stuart Pearce
Nottingham Forest and England



AROUND THE CLUBS

WOLVES FOR FREE

BY PHIL MURPHY

Most Ericsson Cup treasurers would shudder at the thought When the Wollongong Wolves played Gippsland Falcons at Brandon Park recently, spectators were allowed in FREE!

The Wollongong board decided to experiment and it paid off; on the day before the game, Wollongong's Illawarra Mercury published a coupon which entitled readers to free admission, it was simply a matter of taking the coupon along and handing it in at the turnstiles. The club was inundated with coupons. Club chairman Brian Hastings said it was something his board had been talking about for some time.

"No disrespect to the Falcons, but they are one of the teams that don't attract crowds in Wollongong" said Hastings. "We are always assured of a healthy gate against the likes of Marconi, Sydney United and UTS Olympic, and we even attracted over 5500 for our opening game against Adelaide City this season.

"Even though our team has been playing well, realistically we could expect about 2700 people to watch the Wolves battle the Gipplsand Falcons. After making the free offer, the attendance was 5462 and we still made money, our catering takings were just about the best ever, it was a great holiday atmosphere and our players appreciated the extra support; and to complete what was a great night we won 5-2".

Hastings said some spectators who did not normally support the Wolves were attracted by the free offer, and they would come back again. He said the experiment officially was a new year gesture to the fans, its success meant that it may be used once a year. The Wolves next home game is against Sydney United and the ground record could be broken.

Adam Broadbeck is just 18 but he has crammed a lot into a short career. Broadbeck recently made his Ericsson Cup debut for the Wolves in quite bizarre circumstances. Regular keeper Brett Hughes broke down during the warm-up before the home game against Canberra and Brodbeck was virtually called from the shower after playing in the youth league match.

Brett Hughes: His bizarre injury gave teenager Adam Brodbeck his reusch

Just 18, he gave a good account of himself and Wollongong won 2-1. He also played in the 1-1 away draw with the Collingwood Warriors and the big home win against tthe Falcons. Last year Brodbeck was goalkeeper for the Joeys team which reached the quater-finals of the world championship in Ecuador and played in the side from the Oceania qualifying games right through to the 3-1 loss to Brazil in Ecuador.

The youngster also trialled in Switzerland with Grasshoppers, during a visit to his parents who live over there.

"I dislocated a shoulder during my second training session with the club and gained selection in the NSW under-20 which toured Korea with Wolves coach Nick Theodorakopoulos as the coach. At the time I was with the Parramatta Eagles but Nick invited me to trial with Wollongong and I am glad I took the opportunity, but I didn't expecto be in the side so soon". Brodbeck said his game had improved a lot since the arrival of goalkeeper coach Ron Corry.

" I have improved and there is no doubt that Ron Corry is the best goalkeeper coach in the country".

TEL VISITS BREAKERS

BY DANE SKAFTE

New Australian supremo Terry Venables made a special visit to Breakers Stadium last Friday night to watch Newcastle play out a 1-1 draw with Adelaide City in the Ericsson Cup.

☛ Venables was introduced to the crowd at half time by Breakers Media Liaison Officer, Shane Johnson. Venables walked around the ground and waved to the Breakers' largest home crowd this season.

☛ Rumours in the Newcastle camp indicate that the national coach was impressed with talented striker Troy Halpin who outpaced several of the Socceroo players and looked very dangerous all night.

☛ A special match was conducted at half time with the local media taking on the Breakers Supporters Group, "The Rowdies". There were plenty of reputations on the line as the media were trying to reverse the last result when they were thrashed by the local jockeys. The rowdies were victors, this time winning 1-0.

☛ The Breakers Supporters Club have tickets for sales for the away match against Sydney United in April. All tickets cost only $15 which includes bus fare and entry to the game. For further information phone (049) 36 1280

☛ Breakers Team Manager, Jim James missed the away match against Adelaide City recently. James has not missed a game since taking over the job when the club played in the State League and was known as the Australs. James has been suffering from high blood pressure and was under doctors orders to take a much needed rest.

☛ The Breakers youth squad went down to a highly fancied AIS last Friday night. Several of the Breakers senior players started in the match , including Garry Wilson, Glenn Moore and Craig Sharpley.

☛ The Ericsson Cup will take a well earned break until the beginning of February due to the four nations tournament. This will enable the Newcastle Breakers to overcome injuries and prepare for what should be a huge second half of the season for the club.

☛ Talented Newcastle Striker, Harry James will have plenty to celebrate this Saturday night when he turns 21 with over 150 people including several of the Breaker's players expected to attend a party in his honour.

Bourke takes over the Coasties

BY BOB BROOKS

Allan Bourke, vastly experienced as both player and coach has been appointed Senior First Grade Coach by the Central Coast Soccer Association and Coasties Soccer Club.

The close ties between the local Association and the senior club have been forged over many years, in a deliberate plan to offer juniors of the area the opportunity to progress in their playing career. Central Coast Coasties are about to enter their second season in the NSW Super League run by the NSW Soccer Federation

The newly appointed supremo started his playing career with St George in Sydney's eastern suburbs in 1969. The Saints in those days was a team full of international stars. Bourke moved on to Sutherland where he enjoyed five happy and successful years. 1977 saw him join West Adelaide in the very first NSL season. He subsequently joined Canberra City in the NSL.

A three year stint with the Queanbeyan based Inter Monaro included winning the 1979 State League Grand Final. The game was held at the Sydney Sports Ground and his team defeated Sutherland.

Combined with his playing, Allan Bourke had gained his Level 2 Under Eric Worthington in 1974. Ten years later he enrolled in a Level 3 course under Dennis Ford. Bourke was one of only three to successfully complete the course out of an original 80 candidates.

His coaching career began in earnest in the NSW top division with Kuringai until 1991. During the 1992 season he answered a call from Gladesville/Hornsby who were in danger of relegation from Division One. The team finished the term mid-table while just missing out on a Top 4 spot.

Parramatta Eagles was his next stop where he was assistant to his old mentor Rale Rasic. At the same time as working with Rasic, he successfully set up the NSW Elite Academy on the Central Coast with NSW Director of Coaching, David Lee. The academy now caters for 32 boys from the age of 11-15. An Elite squad of 14 girls have now been added.

Asked what his vision was for Central Coast Soccer, he replied, "If all goes well, I see Central Coast one day fielding a team in the National League. The first step for this is planned to be the inclusion of a fourth team in the National Leagues Northern Conference for the 1997/98 season. I see the Coasties holding their own in Super League, with the aim of filling a top 4 position".

When not involved in soccer, Allan is a school teacher. He has served 10 years as a Deputy Principal and a further 5 as a Principal.

It is obvious that Allan Bourke is a man steeped in the great traditions of the "World Game". His has been steady and planned progress up the ladder of success. Central Coast Soccer have a dedicated man in charge who can only bring continuing glory to the area.

GLORY STORIES

MARCONI CHIEF IMPRESSED

Marconi President Frank Labozetta has joined a growing list of National Soccer League officials that have been taken aback by the happenings at Perth Oval on match day.

"When you have two unique personalities like Nick Tana and Paul Afkos working together, it is no surprise to me that Perth Glory have become so successful," said Labozetta.

"I had a super day here, and the Perth officials ought to be congratulated for what they have achieved," he said.

Goalkeeper Bob Catlin, who watched the action from the bench, expressed similar sentiments. "The large crowd is magic," he said. "It is truly a marketing success story, although to have just the one team in the competition from the one state certainly helps.

"We would not get that sort of luxury at Marconi because for example Sydney United's ground is only a kilometre away," said the injured custodian. Catlin however, is confident he will be back between the sticks for their next fixture against Canberra Cosmos in three weeks time.

Glory's seven home games attracted over 76,000, a very healthy average of nearly 11,000.

NEW SIGNING LEFT IN THE WINGS

Perth Glory signed former World Youth International Mark Wingell last week, their 17th player, and the left-footed defender will no doubt be keen to make his face known at Perth Oval, since it is believed he was without a player pass last Sunday and forced to pay to enter the ground.

The 23 year old had a titantic struggle to find the form he portrayed in the 1993 world youth championships, where Australia made the semi-finals.

A shin-splints operation after the tournament halted a promising soccer career, and consequently he suffered a weight problem. But last year at Floreat Athena, Wingell showed that he was not far away from regaining full-fitness.

Meanwhile, former Kiwi international Wynton Rufer will not be signing for the Perth team, since his asking price was more than the Glory would pay. Instead, Rufer is off to New Zealand where he is about to take over as coach of the youth international squad. The former Jef United (J-League) and Werder Bremen (Bundesliga) forward has also apparently expressed his desire to one day take over the senior post.

MAROCCHI JETS OUT OVERSEAS

Tireless Perth Glory coach Gary Marocchi is making a lightning visit to England and Italy this week to pick up on the latest training techniques.

The former Socceroo captain opted not to rest up with his charges, instead he will be visiting the training grounds at Arsenal, West Ham United and Inter Milan.

"I am going to check out the training set-ups and to catch up with some of the Aussie players like Hammers star Stan Lazaridis," he said.

Marocchi also hopes to see some match action, namely Crystal Palace v Leeds United and West Ham v Wrexham, followed by a game in Bologna.

RISING STARS

Falcons draw in the Gully

Gippsland Falcons and Green Gully drew one-all in the Latrobe Valley on Saturday in a hard fought and very even game. The Falcons might have had the better chances but could only score once though Archie Thompson after 56 minutes. Gully fought on strongly and equalised with agoal by Marco Denni, and Falcons manager Paul Hutchinson said Green Gully played 'exceptionally well'. Adrian Savage, Jonathan Buhagiar and John Hutchinson were tops for the Falcons, while goalscorer Denni and Mario Di Fazio starred for Gully.

☛Sunshine Georgies and Thomastown Zebras also drew one-all on Saturday. The Zebras went ahead through Michael Gulino in the second half and looked to have recorded the second victory of the season, but well into injury time Bill Zervopoulos equalised for the Georgies.

☛Collingwood Warriors proved last week's victory was no fluke when it beat South Melbourne by three goals to one at Victoria Park. Con Karasividis fired a free kick just past the wall and into the far corner after only nine minutes, and for the first time the Warriors dominated. South Melbourne failed to pick up Pat Liapis and Mela Medjedovic when they came up for set pieces which resulted in numerous free headers for the tall defenders. On 41 minutes it happened again when Franc Catalano's corner-kick was headed home by Medjedovic. Souths came back in the second half and when the Warriors defence only half cleared the ball, Alex Efstathiou pounced, beat his man and scored cleanly. Thereafter the Warriors were content to soak up pressure and hit on the break, though Alfonso Opazo should have scored when he was left clear with only Dean Anastasiadis to beat. Finally Catalano broke away and left the Blues defence in his wake to score the third and decisive goal for the Warriors.

☛The Victorian Institute of Sport was just to strong for Springvale City running up eight goals to one against. Bill Petrovski and Zoran Petrevski each scored twice, though Petrovski suffered a bad ankle injury late in the game. The other VIS goals were all singles to Laz Zaekis, Michael Anderson, Mitch Bosevski and Michael Ferrante. For the young Springvale side Ian Eman scored the only goal. The win extends the VIS's lead on the table to five points. Five of the VIS squad are off to the Australian Institute this coming week. Michael Anderson, Grgo Saric, Adrian Cuzzuppe, Laz Zaekis and Zoran Petrevski are off on trial, with Anderson already accepting a full scholarship.

☛Melbourne Knights Colts downed Altona Magic by three goals to two. The game was a personal triumph for Ivan Razov of the Colts who contributed all three goals for his side. Darko Todevski kept up his scoring run for the Magic and Pece Siveski another prolific scorer got the other.

☛Bentleigh Greens had a couple of its experienced players to thank for its two-one win away to Heidelberg United. Stefan Oter opened the scoring in 32 minutes for the Greens, but when Daniel Malina equalised for the Bergers in 73 minutes it seemed to be heading for a stalemate. However with six minutes to play the Greens were awarded a penalty kick from which Andrew Charalambous scored to secure the win.

☛The match between Box Hill and Melbourne Knights was not played.

☛There will be a two-week gap in the NYL Victorian Division to correspond with the Socceroo matches in the four nation tournament.

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

☆ ☆ ☆

Northern Division — Round 14

Newcastle	1	AIS	3
NSW IS	1	Wollongong City	2
ACT Academy	1	Sydney United Colts	2
Sydney United	0	QAS	0

TEAM	P	W	D	PW	L	F	A	Pts
Sydney United	11	6	3	0	2	21	9	21
Newcastle Breakers	11	7	0	0	4	25	14	21
NSWIS	12	7	0	0	5	22	21	21
AIS	9	6	2	0	1	20	6	20
UTS Olympic	11	6	2	0	3	24	15	20
Wollongong City	12	5	4	0	3	25	19	19
Marconi Fairfield	10	6	1	0	3	10	9	19
QAS	12	4	1	0	7	24	21	13
Sydney United Colts	11	4	0	0	7	12	18	12
Marconi Fairfield Colts	12	3	2	0	7	14	27	11
ACT AS	11	2	1	0	8	8	25	7
UTS Olympic Colts	10	2	0	0	8	8	29	6

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

☆ ☆ ☆

Southern Division — Round 14

Gippsland	1	Green Gully	1
Sunshine Georgies	1	Thomastown Zebras	1
Collingwood Warriors	3	South Melbourne	1
Springvale City	1	VIS	8
Melbourne Knights Colts	3	Altona Magic	2
Heidelberg United	1	Bentleigh Greens	2

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
VIS	14	11	2	1	52	9	35
South Melbourne	14	10	0	4	61	22	30
Gippsland Falcons	14	9	3	2	48	18	30
Melbourne Knights	13	9	2	2	53	21	29
Green Gully	14	6	3	5	25	26	21
Sunshine Georgies	13	6	2	5	19	24	20
Bentleigh Greens	13	5	2	6	22	27	17
Altona Magic	14	4	2	8	18	34	14
Springvale City Reds	14	2	3	9	19	34	9
Heidelberg United	13	1	2	10	21	40	5
Thomastown Zebras	11	1	1	9	14	36	4
Box Hill	12	0	3	9	12	64	3

SUNSMART NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

☆ ☆ ☆

Sth Australian Division — Round 11

SASI	4	Blue Eagles	2
Modbury	9	Para Hills	1
Adelaide City	2	Woodville City	0
West Adelaide	6	Cumberland United	3

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Adelaide City	11	9	2	0	34	8	29
West Adelaide	11	8	1	2	35	8	25
Modbury	11	7	1	3	25	14	22
SASI	11	6	1	4	31	19	19
Woodville City	11	5	0	6	17	14	15
Adelaide Blue Eagles	11	3	1	7	18	34	10
Cumberland United	11	2	1	8	20	36	7
Para Hills	11	0	1	10	7	53	1

Round 12 Fixtures

Modbury	v	Blue Eagles
Woodville City	v	SASI
Cumberland	v	Para Hills
West Adelaide	v	Adelaide City

With just three rounds to be completed the top four looks like being settled. Woodville's last chance to make the top four rests with next weeks game, as they take on SASI. If they do not beat the yong boys from SASI, then they will end up one point short.

As SASI have to face Modbury and then West Adelaide in their last game, SSI could lose both of those games. As we look at the top four series Adelaide City must start favourite, with Michael Pirone due back from national duty their depth of players increases. The top four series no doubt will be a great spectacle with the winner playing off against the Southern Division winners with could come from either South Melbourne or the VIS.

KATRINA BOYD
NSW Institute of Sport & Australia

WOMEN'S WRITES

BY JANENE MAR

STAR PROFILE

KELLY GOLEBIOWSKI

Date of Birth	26 July 1981
Birthplace	Blacktown, NSW
Height	157cm
L or R footed?	Left
Position?	Utility
Club?	NSWIS
Occupation?	Student at Westfield Sports High
Brothers/Sisters?	1 Brother and 1 Sister
Started playing?	Age 4
Previous clubs?	Parklea, Marayong Spurs,
Blacktown Reps:	NSW Junior academy, Aust Junior '94, '95 Aust Youth 96, Australian team '96
First match for Australia?	USA in Orlando in '96
Most difficult opponent?	Joy Fawcett (USA)
Soccer highlight?	Australian team selection and USA tour
Favourite player?	Roy Keane and Tisha Venturini
Car?	Not old enough!'
Favourite food ?	Ham/pineapple pizza
Favourite drink?	Apple/blackcurrant juice
Favourite music?	Grunge/R&B
Favourite TV?	Blue Heelers
Favourite reading?	Joke books, Soccer History
Hobbies?	Soccer, Athletics
If you won the lottery?	I would buy Soccer Australia and NSW Soccer
Most famous person you met?	Pele
Soccer ambitions?	World Cup and Olympics
Pre-match meal?	Pasta and Chicken
Pre-match superstitions?	I kiss my lucky coin
Best aspect of your game?	Vision
Worst aspect of your game?	Heading and effort
Best goal scored?	NSWCHS v VICCHS diving header
National league prediction?	NSWIS

SOCCER GREAT LINKED WITH COACHING JOB

Word has it that the appointment of the new National Coach may be imminent, and could be announced some time this week should negotiations go according to plan.

And the person to lead Australian women's Soccer into the Sydney 2000 Olympics? AWSA officials refuse to comment on the identity of their prospect, honouring the confidentiality and integrity of the situation as negotiations continue.

But speculation sees the candidate most closely linked to the position to be one of the most celebrated of Australian Soccer talents. Certainly one of the biggest names in football, the man looks to have the background, the knowledge and characteristics essential for a great coach. His appointment would be an inspiration and a real coup for women's Soccer in Australia.

AWSA is happy to report the level of interest in the coaching position has been quite amazing. The number of enquiries and applications, despite the fact the job was not advertised, indicates the high regard in which women's football is now held. Those showing interest included some of the top coaches in Australian men's Soccer of today.

AWSA had made the decision to headhunt the best person for the number one job. Drawing up a shortlist of the finest coaching talent, the net was cast far and wide. Top of the list was to the home of women's soccer, with an approach to Soccer supremo Tony Di Cicco, the mastermind behind the incredible success of the USA Team.

The appointment of Australia's next National Coach is one of the most vital decisions to be made in terms of the future success and development of the game, both on the world stage as well as the local grassroots level.

"This position is in the top four or five Soccer coaching positions in Australia, both financially and for the opportunities it holds," said AWSA chief Warren Fisher.

A full-time position as National Coach with the prospect of World Cup and Olympic Games representation – an ideal recipe. But it was only four years ago that the picture looked vastly different – an honorary coach and an Australian Squad that had seen no action on the park for three years.

The status as an Olympic sport brought with it great new levels of government funding. Tom Sermanni became the inaugural full-time Australian Coach and built up the elite program from scratch. Working against time, he took Australia to its first World Cup, and more recently has led the Aussies to some promising performances against the best in the world. As a result, the incoming National Coach can now feel his way into the job with a structure and foundation already in place.

The new coach will also be based in Canberra, the rationale being the AWSA is aiming to establish a centralised National Squad program at the AIS within the next two years. The contract will run until the end of the 2000 Olympic Games.

COOPER LANDS SCHOLARSHIP

Aussie captain Sarah Cooper has been awarded a twelve month coaching scholarship working within women's Soccer.

The much sought after scholarship is run by the Australian Coaching Council with the aim to foster promising young coaches, and this year Australian women's Soccer was the recipient.

With a university degree in physical education, and a Level 2 coach, Cooper is more than qualified to take on the role. Moving only recently south to Canberra, Cooper was for two years Development Officer for the NT Soccer Federation, with another two years spent at NT Touch in a similar role. The two jobs saw her working in junior development and basic coaching, as well as running Level 1 coaching courses. She has already coached junior representative teams.

Cooper will be based at the ACT Academy of Sport, working with the women's Soccer squad and younger feeder squad, with Chris Tanzey as supervising coach.

"I'll get more hands-on experience there – plus I'll probably sit in on some of the AIS boys' training," explained Cooper. She will work mainly with the ACTAS feeder squad twice a week, together with coach Katrina Neuss, and at other times by herself. Cooper may also help out now and then with the Academy squad.

As well as the specific coaching work, scholarship holders also undertake studies for a Diploma of Coaching, run through the AIS, with lectures three mornings per week plus a variety of assignments.

Other tasks may include smaller projects under the direction of AWSA involving the Australian Team and promotional duties.

The paid scholarship is a great opportunity and the perfect grounding for a player who has hopes of moving into coaching in the future.

"It's ideal for me," said the 27 year old. "It's not too intensive – I've still got time to do my own training. It's a great experience and I should learn a lot. I won't be making the most of it initially, as I want to play in 2000, but I'd like to do a little bit of coaching along the way. Perhaps an Under 16 rep team, although there are time commitments to consider. Then after, I'll decide if I want to take it on as a profession."

Cooper has already started the scholarship, but will start to see real action when training resumes from holiday mode this week.

In the meantime, the World Cup player has been working hard on her rehabilitation from the knee surgery performed nine weeks ago. The six months recovery sees her due to be back on the pitch at the end of April.

"It's coming on fairly well," reported Cooper. "I can ride, swim, jump, and work on the stepper and light weights, and it's probably two weeks before I can run. But I won't really know my progress till I start doing Soccer type stuff."

"I want to hang out for the whole six months. I don't want to rush back in early, especially with the US Cup on the month after – I'll concentrate on getting my fitness up there."

USA HERE SOON

World number one USA are set to arrive in Australia on 27 February. Forced to postpone their original January visit, the Americans will now take on Australia over three test matches after the Adelaide round of the Ansett Australia Summer Series.

To accommodate the historic international series, the Brisbane leg of the Ansett national league (originally scheduled for the first weekend in March) will now be moved to 7-9 March.

So far, only Canberra has been locked in as one of the three test match venues. AWSA will be talking to State federations to assess their enthusiasm to host the remaining two fixtures. Those at the top of the list would appear to be Sydney, Newcastle and Melbourne.

AWSA has revealed the exciting news of a "strong possibility" the matches will receive coverage on free-to-air television.

Should the new National Coach not be in place by that time the two national assistant coaches Greg Brown and Jeff Olver, will probably be in charge of the Australian Team for that period.

The Australian Team will be announced after the next two rounds of the Ansett Summer Series, or possibly slightly earlier.

US SOCCER

Aussies Return to US Cup

USA has invited Australia to compete in the prestigious annual tournament, the US Cup. The invitation, which AWSA has accepted, confirms that Australia is these days well respected in international football ranks.

Australia competed in the 1995 US Cup, the month after the disappointment of the World Cup. The US Cup provided a rare opportunity to take on the newly crowned World Champions Norway, and the experience of another crack at the Americans after their gutsy encounter during the World Cup. The third opponent was Chinese Taipei. Respectable results against the two superpowers helped raise the international profile of Australia.

This year's event sees the Green and Golds up against USA and Italy. The one remaining berth is presently being decided, with Portugal the likely candidate.

Italy is keen to re-establish itself as a force in world football. After finishing a credible sixth in the inaugural World Cup, Italy failed to qualify for the 1995 event. Since then, they have finished top of UEFA's (Europe) Group 3 ahead of England, to qualify for the UEFA Finals Tournament kicking off in June this year.

The 1997 US Cup is scheduled to run from 31 May to 8 June on the USA's east coast. Actual venues are yet to be confirmed.

WorldCup USA97

SOUTH AMERICA

— COMPILED BY MARIO ETCHART —

THE BEST COACH

Colombian Hernan Darion Gomez was named "1996 Coach of the year" in the pool carried out by the Uruguayan newspaper "El Pais".

Gomez, in charge of the Colombian national team and currently leading the South American 1998 World Cup group qualifiers, beat former Argentinian national coach Cesar Luis Menotti in the poll. Menotti guided Argentina to win the 1978 World Cup.

RESULTS OF POOL 2

Coach	Country	Votes
Gomez	Colombia	44
Menotti	Argentina	32
Carpegiani	Brazil	21
Luxemburgo	Brazil	19
Zagallo	Brazil	18
Diaz	Argentina	18
Benitez	Paraguay	3
Scolari	Brazil	2
Passarella	Argentina	2
Nunez	Uruguay	1
Maturana	Colombia	1

RESULT OF THE POOL

Player	Country	Votes
Ronaldo Da Gama	Brazil	87
Matthias Sammer	Germany	67
George Weah	Liberia	31
Paolo Maldini	Italy	31
Vitor Baia	Portugal	22
Marcel Desailly	France	21
Davor Suker	Croatia	18
Dieter Eilts	Germany	16
Steve McManaman	England	16
Michael Reiziger	Holland	16
Christian Ziege	Germany	16
Eric Cantona	France	15
Andreas Kopke	Germany	13
David Seaman	England	13
Javier Zanetti	Argentina	12
Youri Djorkaeff	France	10
Alen Boksic	Croatia	10
Alessandro Del Piero	Italy	10
Paolo Montero	Uruguay	9
Jocelyn Angloma	France	9
Thomas Helmer	Germany	9
Fernando Hierro	Spain	9
Raul Gonzalez	Spain	9
Diego Simeone	Argentina	9
Karel Poborksy	Czech Republic	9
Andreas Moller	Germany	9

Ronaldo the King

Sensational Brazilian striker Ronaldo, who is currently playing for Spanish giants, Barcelona, is the new European Player of the Year for 1996 as voted by 180 journalists in the Uruguyan newspaper "El Pais".

Ronaldo beat German defender Mathias Sammer and Liberia's AC Milan striker George Weah ,while Paolo Maldini finished in fourth place.

Meanwhile according to the same pool, Juventus tactician Marcelo Lippi won the award as 1996 European Coach of the Year. Lippi guided Juventus to win the European club championship and the Toyota Cup in Tokyo.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

YEAR	PLAYER	COACH
1986	Antonio Alzamendi (Uruguay)	Carlos Bilardo (Argentina)
1987	Carlos Valderrama (Columbia)	Carlos Bilardo(Argentina)
1988	Ruben Paz (Uruguay)	Roberto Fleitas(Uruguay)
1989	Bebeto (Brazil)	Sebatian Lazaroni (Brazil)
1990	Raul Amarilla (Paraguay)	Luis Cubilla(Uruguay)
1991	Oscar Ruggeri (Argentina)	Alfio Basile(Argentina)
1992	Rai (Brazil)	Tele Santana (Brazil)
1993	Carlos Valderrama	Francisco Maturana (Colombia)
1994	Cafu (Brazil)	Tele Santana (Brazil)
1995	Enzo Francescoli (Uruguay)	Hector Nunez (Uruguay)

RESULT OF THE POOL

Player	Country	Votes
Chilavert	Paraguay	80
Francescole	Uruaguay	69
Valderrama	Colombia	41
Ortega	Argentina	41
Arce	Paraguay	27
Gamara	Paraguay	26
Salas	Chile	23
Sorin	Argentina	18
Acuna	Paraguay	18
Ayala	Paraguay	17
Mondragon	Colombia	15
Palhinha	Brazil	14
Catalino	Paraguay	13
Alvarez	Colombia	13
Rivera	Ecuador	10
Caceres	Argentina	10
Etcheverry	Bollvia	10
Serna	Ecuador	10

THE BEST TEAMS

The panel of 180 soccer journalists who participated in the poll carried out by the newspaper "El Pais" of Uruguay elected the following teams:

AMERICA - EUROPE

Chilavert (Paraguay), Arce, (Paraguay), Sammer (Germany), Gamarra (Paraguay), Maldini (Italy), Valderrama (Colombia), Francescoli (Uruguay), Acuna (Paraguay), Ronaldo (Brazil), Ortega (Argentina), Weah (Liberia).

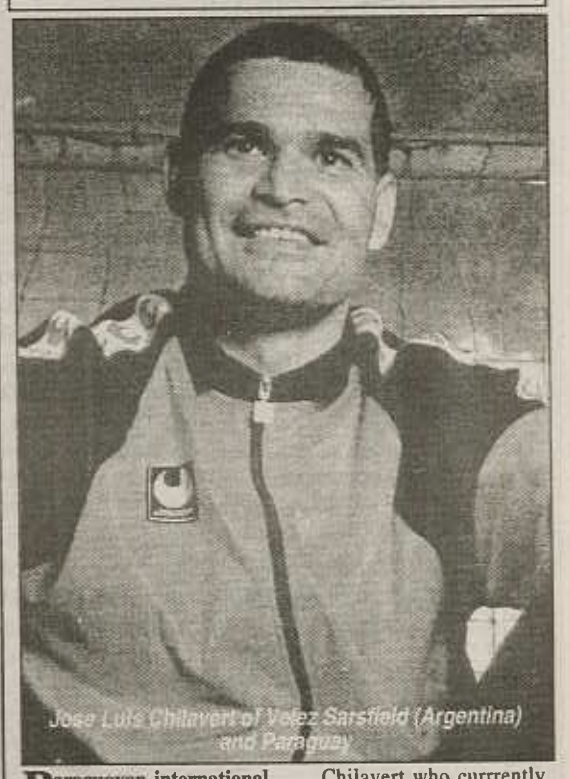
AMERICA

Chilavert (Paraguay), Arce (Paraguay), Gamarra (Paraguay), Ayala (Paraguay), Sorin (Argentina), Valderrama (Columbia), Palhinha (Brazil), Francescoli (Uruguay), Acuna (Paraguay), Ortega (Argentina), Salas (Chile).

EUROPE

Baja (Portugal), Sammer (Germany), Resiger (Holland), Desailly (France), Malini (Italy), McManaman (England), Bilts (Germany), Ziege (Germany), Ronaldo (Brazil), Shearer (England), Weah Liberia.

AMERICAN PLAYER OF THE YEAR


Jose Luis Chilavert of Velez Sarsfield (Argentina) and Paraguay

Paraguayan international goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert was named "1996 Player of the Year" in the American continent by the prestigious Uruguayan newspaper "El Pais", while Hernan Dario Gomez, coach of the Columbian national team, was selected as "1996 Coach of the Year".

The annual poll, carried out by the paper with the input of 180 soccer journalists in the Americas and Europe, has the support and recognition of the South American Football Federation and FIFA.

Chilavert who currrently plays for Argentine club Velez Sarsfield, has won four Argentine soccer leagues, one Libertadores Cup, one Inter American Cup, one Toyota Cup and one South American Supercup and several awards as one of the best players in Argentina.

The brilliant goalkeeper is the second Paraguayan to win the prestigious award. His compatriot, striker Raul Vicente Amarilla won it in 1990, while Colombian Carlos Valderrama is the only footballer who won the award twice, once in '87 and in '93.

LAKERS
PAUL
TRIMBOLI
PUMA
OPTUS
ERICSSON

Livingston FC

BY STUART JONES

Ground: Almondvale Stadium
Address: Almondvale Rd Livingston EH54 7BN
Previous Name: Meadowbank Thistle
Founded: 1943
Admitted to League: 1974
Ground Capacity: 16500 (only main stand used at present 7500)
Seats: 16500 (as above)
Pitch Size: 105 yd *72yd
Largest Gate: 4000 v Albion Rovers Lge Cp Rd 1 (9th Sept 1974)
Biggest Win: 6-0 v Raith Rovers Second Division 9 Nov 1985 (+ 15-0 Ayrshire Cup v Lanemark 15 Nov 1890)
Heaviest Defeat: 0-8 v Hamilton A Division Two 14 Dec 1994
Nickname: Thistle or Wee Jags
Colours: Amber with Black trim
Honours: League:
Second Division 1986-87
Third Division 1995-96

History:
The club were originally founded as Ferranti Thistle in 1943. In 1974 the club was elected to the league- the first since 1966 (Clydebank) and there was much acrimony over this decision. They had to do two things however, drop their name and find a better ground. So it was that the club were allowed to use Meadowbank Staduim (which had been designed for use at the 1970 Commonwealth Games). The club had a contract for use of the ground until 1985. They did not have it exclusively though; fetes and cattle shows would often draw more crowds than the football sometimes!

Important cup ties were played elsewhere at Tynecastle or Easter Road. Therefore, last season the club board voted to move to Livingston. Their first season there saw the club win the Division Three title and today they are pushing for promotion to Division One. The choice was difficult and at times controversial, however, the club's move to Livingston has been successful both on and off the park.

LEAGUE TABLES

— SOUTHERN LEAGUE—

SOUTHAMPTON	22	18	1	3	53	18	37
BRISTOL CITY	22	13	7	2	67	33	33
TOTTENHAM H	22	12	4	6	52	31	28
CHARLTON	22	12	4	6	50	34	28
READING	22	8	7	7	39	31	23
NEW BRAMPTON	22	9	4	9	37	37	22
SHEPPEY UTD	22	10	1	11	40	49	21
GRAVESEND UTD	22	7	6	9	28	39	20
MILLWALL	22	8	2	12	48	45	18
SWINDON TOWN	22	7	2	13	36	48	16
NORTHFLEET	22	4	3	15	28	61	11
WOLVERTON	22	3	1	18	28	82	7

UGO EHIOGU: The modern 1997 player with Aston Villa. Will the Villans emulate their colleagues of one hundred years ago?

Weird and Wonderful

BY STUART JONES

1897-98

Sheffield United went one better than the year before and took out the title five points clear of Sunderland. Sunderland had certainly turned it around after staying up only by winning its test match the previous season. Wolves and Everton were both only two points off second place. At the bottom an amazing five clubs finished level on 24 points, Stoke and Blackburn , who were the unfortunate clubs to suffer the test matches due to having the poorest goal difference of all the teams.

In the second division Burton Wanderers had ben replaced by Luton Town, despite the fact that Lincoln had finished below them on the table, and they survived. Burnley and Newcastle qualified for the last Test Matches to be played. Unlike the previous season, both these clubs had success in the playoffs and were promoted. Bottom of the lot was Loughborough Town, who won only one game and drew none away from home.

In the semi-finals of the FA Cup, Nottingham Forest defeated Southampton 2-0 in a replay (the first game finished 1-1), while Derby County had beaten defeated finalists from the previous season , Everton, 3-1. Again the Crystal Palace was the venue and the attendance was still over 60000 mark, although slightly down on the previous season. The media had predicted an easy game for Derby, and popular sentiment was said to be behind them. However Forest were not to be outdone and goals from Capes (2) and McPherson gave them the FA Cup. Derby had equalised to make it one each through Bloomer's headed goal; however an error by Derby's keeper let in Capes for his second. McPherson only made it 3-1 in the closing minutes of the game.

Southampton won the Southern League again, with future football league sides in Bristol City and Tottenham finishing second and third respectively. In the second division, Royal Artillery (Portsmouth) won and went up after defeating Wolverton and Northfleet int the test matches. Warmly were the first club to score 100 goals in a season (remarkably they scored 108 in only 22 games, an average of near on five a game, conceding less than a goal a game!).

In Scotland Celtic finished on 33 points ahead of Rangers (29) and Hibernian (22). In the Scottish FA Cup final Rangers retained their trophy this time beating Kilmarnock 2-0 in tthe final.

Holland	—	RAP Amsterdam
Italy	—	Genoa
Switzerland	—	Grasshoppers Zurich

LEAGUE TABLES

DIVISION ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
SHEFFIELD UTD	30	9	4	2	26	14	8	4	3	29	17	42
SUNDERLAND	30	12	2	1	27	8	4	3	8	16	22	37
WOLVES	30	10	4	1	36	14	4	3	8	21	27	35
EVERTON	30	11	3	1	33	12	2	6	7	15	27	35
SHEFFIELD WED	30	12	0	3	39	15	3	3	9	12	27	33
ASTON VILLA	30	12	1	2	47	21	2	4	9	14	30	33
WBA	30	8	5	2	25	16	3	5	7	19	29	32
NOTTINGHAM F	30	7	5	3	30	19	4	4	7	17	30	31
LIVERPOOL	30	7	4	4	27	16	4	2	9	21	29	28
DERBY CO	30	10	3	2	40	19	1	3	11	17	42	28
BOLTON W	30	9	2	4	18	13	2	2	11	10	28	26
PRESTON NE	30	7	5	3	26	15	1	3	11	9	28	24
NOTTS CO	30	4	6	5	23	23	4	2	9	13	23	24
BURY	30	8	3	4	25	19	0	5	10	14	32	24
BLACKBURN ROVERS	30	4	7	4	20	22	3	3	9	19	32	24
STOKE	30	8	3	4	21	14	0	5	10	14	41	24

DIVISION 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
BURNLEY	30	14	1	0	64	13	6	7	2	16	11	48
NEWCASTLE	30	14	0	1	43	10	7	3	5	21	22	45
MANCHESTER C	30	10	4	1	45	15	5	5	5	21	21	39
NEWTON HEATH	30	11	2	2	42	10	5	4	6	22	25	38
W ARSENAL	30	10	4	1	41	14	6	1	8	28	35	37
SMALL HEATRH	30	11	1	3	37	18	5	3	7	21	32	36
LEICESTER F	30	8	5	2	26	11	5	2	8	20	24	33
LUTON T	30	10	2	3	50	13	3	2	10	18	37	30
GAINSBORO T	30	10	4	1	30	12	2	2	11	20	42	30
WALSALL	30	9	3	3	42	15	3	2	10	16	43	29
BLACKPOOL	30	8	4	3	32	15	2	1	12	17	46	25
GRIMSBY	30	9	1	5	44	24	1	3	11	8	38	24
BURTON	30	7	3	5	25	21	1	2	12	13	48	21
LINCOLN	30	6	3	6	27	27	0	2	13	16	55	17
DARWEN	30	4	1	10	21	32	2	1	12	10	44	14
LOUGHBORO T	30	5	2	8	15	26	1	0	14	9	61	14

***ASTON VILLA:** The team which won the double in 1897 — one hundred years ago. Over half the players sported moustaches.*

UK STORIES

'BIGGER THAN GOD' KEEGAN QUITS

The tabloids had photos of weeping teenagers hanging over the wrought-iron gates of Newcastle United Football Club. The Financial Times newspaper had a front page story about concern among investment analysts, over the club's planned flotation.

The two images of the same event, the resignation of Newcastle's revered manager Kevin Keegan, show just how tough the job of running an elite British soccer club has become. Keegan was destroyed by a combination of local passions that would make the Collingwood faithful look limp, as well as the demands of a multi-million pound business.

He is the latest casualty among premier league managers where disappointed expectations take a brutal toll.

Only Alex Ferguson who has held his job at Manchester United for 10 years, Joe Kinnear, who's performed miracles at unfashionable and poverty-stricken Wimbleon, for five years, and Roy Evans with three years at league-leaders Liverpool, have lasted any length of time.

At the other end of the scale, eight of the 20 managers, three of them caretakers, have been in their jobs for less than a year.

FABULOUS CAREER

The game has been fabulous to Keegan, who played 63 times for England and was the undisputed star of the great Liverpool team, which won the first of their four European Cups in 1977, exactly 20 years ago.

He also had a spell in Germany with Hamburg and was twice voted European Footballer Of The Year before ending his playing career with the club he has made his managerial name with, Newcastle United.

After hanging up his boots he spent eight years in southern Spain, playing a lot of golf, before being lured back to Newcastle in its bleak midwinter of 1992. The proud club was then in danger of being relegated from the old second division, but a mere two years later they finished third in the Premier League.

Keegan's arrival coincided with other factors. The north eastern city, after decades of decline following the collapse of its heavy industry, was enjoying economic regeneration. Businessman Sir John Hall was pouring millions into the club at a time when the trading of players was increasingly deregulated.

BIG SPENDER

Keegan became one of the game's great spenders. Overall, he spent more than $120 million, including a world record $30 million on top striker Alan Shearer last year.

The signing of Shearer was supposed to make the difference. It hasn't quite, though it's not been a bad season. Newcastle are fourth in the league, despite a poor run at the end of the year. They are still in the FA Cup and the fans have stayed steadfast.

"How can he leave us?" sobbed Victoria Rickaby, 16. "He is God around here. He is bigger than God." And it wasn't just the teens.

"I can hardly speak," said Sister Josepha, the nun who heads a primary school which has written Keegan's name into its hymns.

His resignation was not, in retrospect, so unexpected as he considered going after the title slipped through his fingers last year, and again after a Christmas week defeat last month.

This time he proposed going at the end of the season. Instead, largely because of Newcastle's prospective flotation and the disclosure requirements for its prospectus, he was told that if he wanted to go, he should go immediately.

He went, but the smiling, confident, tanned man with glossy black hair who walked into St James Park in 1992 left yesterday, morose, lined of face, his hair rapidly greying

FASTEST SENDING OFF

Swindon's Ian Culverhouse made FA Cup history when he was sent off after just 52 seconds in his side's 3-0 third round defeat at Everton.

Culverhouse's dismissal, for deliberate handball in the penalty area, was the fastest in the 126-year history of England's premier cup competition. It resulted in a penalty, converted by Ukrainian Andrei Kanchelskis.

Everton, Cup winners in 1995, increased their lead after 17 minutes following an error by former Liverpool winger Mark Walters. His backpass was woefully short allowing England forward Nick Barmby to intercept, round goalkeeper Fraser Digby and score. Duncan Ferguson made it 3-0 early in the second half, rising above the Swindon defence to head home a cross from Earl Barrett.

Swindon's miserable afternoon was completed when Gary Elkins was sent off after 74 minutes for a second bookable offence.

Earlier in the day, England midfielder Robert Lee scored against his former club Charlton before the first division side fought back to draw 1-1 with Newcastle.

BOSNICH BLAMES SHEARER

Aston Villa's Australian goalkeeper Mark Bosnich is in the news again. He has blamed England captain Alan Shearer for the Socceroo's embarrassing slip up against Newcastle this week.

Bosnich fell over and lost the ball providing Newcastle's Lee Clark with his side's second goal; however, Bosnich was furious, insisting that it was not his fault and that it was Shearer who caused him to stumble by tugging on his shirt as he was attempting a clearance.

"I'll let the people at home decide for themselves" an angry Bosnich said later on BBC's Match of the Day. "Obviously from my point of view, my momentum was stopped by him and when he let go again I lost balance".

Aston Villa manager Brian Little said Shearer, the most expensive player in England, felt that the striker did interfere with his goalkeeper. Match of the Day analayst, and former Liverpool defender Alan Hansen, noted that Newcastle seemed to have a ploy of tugging the goalkeeper's shirt while he was attempting clearances.

Villa fought back from a two goal deficit in the 21st minute to draw level in the 52nd in an exciting and emotional game, Newcastle's first since the controversial resignation of their manager Kevin Keegan. Despite the early mishap, Bosnich kept Villa in the game with two impressive saves from Keith Gillespie and Darren Peacock.

The draw has left Villa in sixth place, seven points adrift of frontrunners Liverpool, who were surprisingly held to a 0-0 draw. Newcastle, despite their difficulties, are still in the hunt ,handily placed in fourth spot.

POLE TURNOVER

1995 English Champions Blackburn Rovers have signed Poland striker Marek Citko from Widzew Lodz in a $A7.86 million deal.

21 year old Citko, who scored against England in the World Cup qualifying game at Wembley in October, also became a target for Italian giants AC Milan, after they failed to qualify for the quarter-finals of the European Champions' League.

☆ ☆ ☆

BABY FACED WANDERER

Sweden's Tomas Brolin known as 'the baby-faced assassin' will remain in the football wilderness after Leeds United rejected his request to train with his former club Parma.

Leeds have told the Italian Serie-A side they must table an offer if they want the Swedish international striker, who is in breach of contract by staying away from the Premiership club.

BIG GEORGE YOUNG DIES

Tributes have been flowing in following the death of one of Scotand's most famous internationals.

George Young, the former Rangers and Scotland defender, died yesterday aged 74.

He played for Scotland 53 times and captained his country a record 48 times.

This was at a time when British international teams played fewer matches.

He was a legend in British football during the 1940s and 50s and was made captain of the Scottish team after only five appearances.

George Young made his debut against Northern Ireland in April 1946 and played his last game in 1957 versus Switzerland

U.K. SOCCER

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